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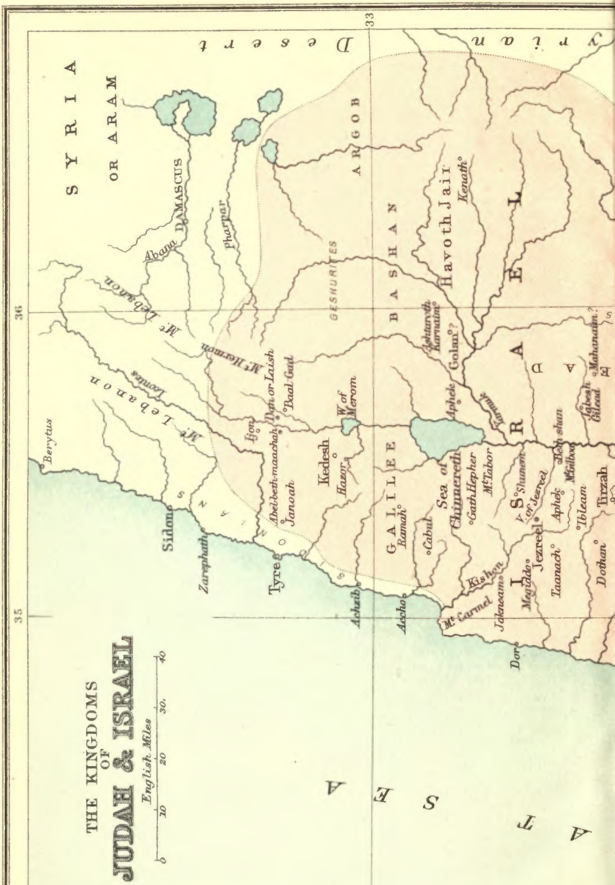
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Ijon
Dan or Laish
Baal Gad
Abel-beth-maachah
Janoah
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W. of Merom
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Cabul
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Mt. Tabor
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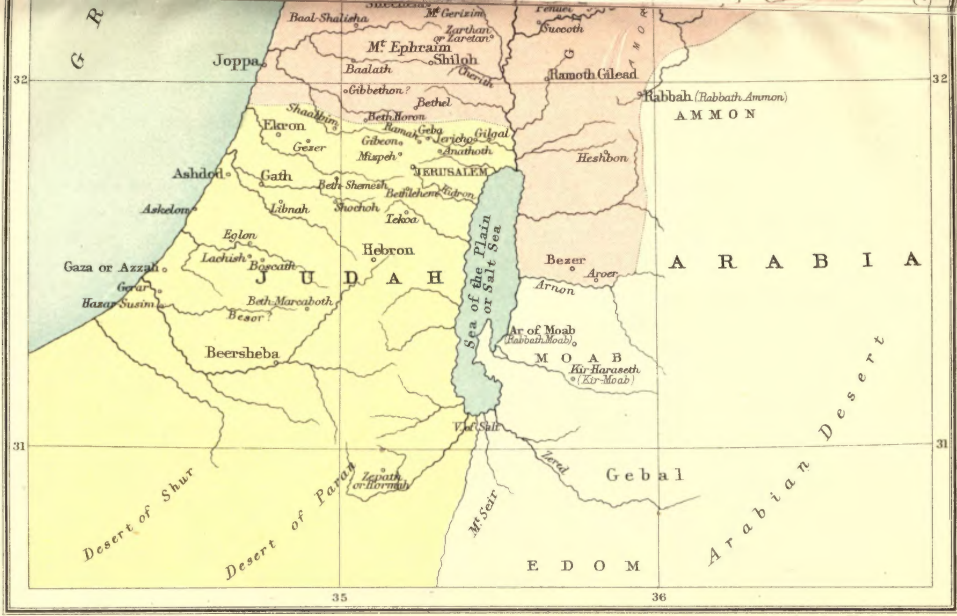

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Ramoth Gilead
Rabbah (Rabbath Ammon)
AMMON
Gibbethon?
Bethel
Shaalbim
Beth Horon
Ramah
Geba
Jericho
Gilgal
Ekron
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Libnah
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Tekoa
Eglon
Hebron
Lachish
Bozcath
Bezer
Aroer
ARABIA
Gaza or Azzah
JUDAH
Sea of the Plain or Salt Sea
Arnon
Gerar
Hazar Susim
Beth-Marcaboth
Besor?
Ar of Moab (Rabbath Moab)
MOAB
Beersheba
Kir-Haraseth (Kir-Moab)
V. of Salt
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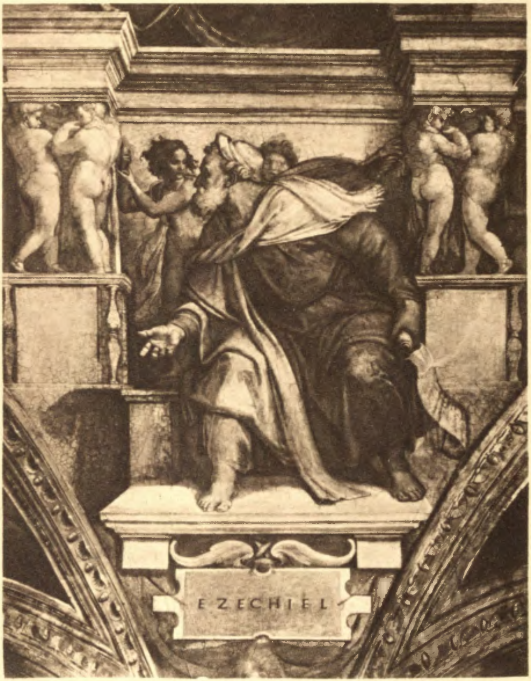

EZEKIEL.
BY MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI.

The Century Bible

A MODERN COMMENTARY

Jeremiah
and
Lamentations

VOL. II

JEREMIAH XXV TO LII
LAMENTATIONS

INTRODUCTION
REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES
ILLUSTRATIONS

EDITED BY

A. S. PEAKE, D.D.

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giving him warning that eminent authorities take a different view. And in a Commentary on Jeremiah it is specially incumbent on the writer to observe this rule, in view of the very important work recently done on the book, which is not accessible to the English reader; of the new problems which have been raised; and the fact that much information required by students in Universities and Colleges is as yet provided for them in English nowhere else.

My friend Prof. Bennett finds my treatment of Jeremiah and the Chaldean party more one-sided than what I should have given in a more technical work (*Review of Theology and Philosophy*, August, 1911). Anything he said on an Old Testament subject would always claim my careful attention; but especially would this be the case in a subject where he has himself done such admirable work. It is one of the misfortunes incident to the piecemeal publication of this work, that impressions have been made by the summary statement in the Introduction to the first volume, which would perhaps have been removed by the qualifications which are given in the second volume. I have left my notes on the episode of Hananiah as they were written before Prof. Bennett's review appeared; and I trust that he will feel that I have done full justice to Hananiah's sincerity. But I cannot retreat from my conviction that Jeremiah (I say nothing of 'the Chaldean party,' of which I know next to nothing) was entirely in the right in the policy he laid down. Here, I fear, there is a real difference between us; but I hope my judgement is not warped by the hero-worship to which I am happy to plead guilty.

ARTHUR S. PEAKE.

December 15, 1911.

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THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

JEREMIAH

[R] THE word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the 25

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xxv. Judgement on Judah and the Nations at the Hand of the Chaldeans.

With this chapter we return from the reign of Zedekiah to that of Jehoiakim. The fourth year of that monarch, to which the oracle is assigned, was a critical year not merely for the prophet and for Judah but for universal history. In it Jeremiah received his commission to collect all his prophecies, that the people might have an opportunity of escaping by amendment of life from the evil which Yahweh purposed against them. In this year, according to xlvi. 2 (though it may have been a year earlier : see note on xxv. 1), the battle of Carchemish took place, in which the defeat of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar settled the contest between Egypt and Babylon for the rule of Western Asia in favour of the latter. This year was therefore critical not only for the Jews, since it transferred them from the short-lived suzerainty of Pharaoh to that of Nebuchadnezzar, but for other peoples as well. It was fitting therefore that Jeremiah should at such a time gather up his teaching for one great cumulative appeal ; and we might anticipate that he would, as a prophet set over the nations (i. 10), embrace them also in his survey of the situation created by this decisive turn in the fortunes of his world. Such an anticipation seems to be justified by the present chapter, in which the prophet not only appeals to his long-continued warnings to Judah and predicts the vengeance of God upon it, but includes many peoples in his vision of judgement.

But although the chapter seems to suit the historical situation, it presents numerous critical difficulties, which have excited such suspicion that several scholars have rejected its authenticity altogether, while others eliminate considerable parts of it. The most noteworthy fact about the chapter is that between 13 and 15 the LXX has inserted the oracles on the foreign nations, xlvi-li (xxv. 14 being absent in the LXX). The order in which these chapters are placed differs in the Hebrew and the Greek text, but this is a matter to be considered when these chapters are discussed. But the criticism of the present chapter is connected with that of xlvi-li in two ways. A denial of the Jeremianic origin of the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son

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oracles on the foreign nations tends to draw with it a rejection of xxv. And there is also the question whether these oracles originally stood in immediate connexion with xxv. The former of these questions cannot be profitably discussed at this stage; it belongs rather to the examination of these oracles. It must suffice to say at this point that, while in their present form they contain not a little non-Jeremianic matter, they yet have a genuine nucleus; so that we may approach the present chapter without any prejudice against its authenticity derived from a similar conviction with reference to the oracles on the nations. The second question, however, calls for attention here.

It cannot be denied that this chapter is closely connected with the oracles on the nations. In both cases the same peoples to a large extent recur with considerable, though by no means complete, agreement in order. Further xxv. 13 refers definitely to a book in which a prophecy against Babylon is contained, and such a prophecy we have in l–li. But is the position accorded to these oracles by the LXX after xxv. 13 original? In its present form xxv. 1–13 leads up well to such a series of oracles on the nations, and the reference to 'this book' implies that a collection of oracles was appended. Moreover, the LXX takes the closing words of xxv. 13 as a title to this collection. Probably the Hebrew should also be interpreted in the same way (see note on 12–14). But, if so, we have definite evidence that at one time xlvi–li stood after xxv. 13 not only in the LXX but in the Hebrew text itself. It is nevertheless very improbable that this was its original position. The insertion of these oracles at this point tears xxv in two, separating sections that are really connected. Further, the vision of the goblet of Yahweh's wrath obviously cannot have followed the detailed prophecies on the nations. It leads up to them admirably, but its effect is completely lost if it is placed after them. And it is questionable whether xxv. 1–13 was fitted in its original form to be an introduction to xlvi–li. Schwally (in Stade's *Zeitschrift* for 1888, pp. 177–217) has argued that the original text of 1–13 has undergone a revision in the LXX which has been carried a stage further in the Hebrew. Cornill, on the basis of Schwally's investigation, defends the position that it is only in this doubly revised form that the passage constitutes a good introduction to xlvi–li, and that the second revision was definitely intended to fit it for this purpose. If so, the same conclusion would result that xlvi–li did not originally follow xxv. 1–13. The validity of this last argument is rather a problem in the detailed exegesis of the passage, but the other arguments suffice to render it improbable that the oracles against the foreign nations are correctly placed in the LXX.

of Josiah, king of Judah; the same was the first year of

What then was their original position? In view of the fact that in the Hebrew they once occupied the same position as they now hold in the LXX, it is not an arbitrary suggestion that they were originally connected with xxv, a suggestion which is corroborated by the community of subject-matter. Since, however, they must follow rather than precede the vision of the goblet, we should probably place them at the close of xxv in its original form. But this raises the further question as to the reason for their transposition from the close of xxv to the position they now hold in the LXX and once held in the Hebrew text. Cornill points out that a difficulty was created by the fact that the anticipations expressed in the vision of the goblet of Yahweh's wrath were not really fulfilled after Carchemish, so that it became advisable to detach the oracles on the nations from the vision, a course which was also recommended by the feeling in the later period that such a vision was too great to be treated as a mere description of political catastrophes, and had to be brought into connexion with God's final judgement on the world. In confirmation of this he points to the working over which xxv. 15–38 has experienced. This has been in the direction of heightening the apocalyptic character of the passage, and turning it into a description of the Divine judgement on the nations as the later Jewish eschatology conceived it. But the vision as thus transformed no longer permitted the oracles on the nations with their relevance to the historical situation to stand as its explication, and this provided a further reason for removing them from their original connexion. The date in xlvi. 2, 'in the fourth year of Jehoiakim,' was identical with that in xxv. 1, and occasioned the connexion with xxv. 1–13, from which, with the exception of the title, the oracles on the nations were subsequently removed to the position they now hold in the Hebrew text.

The question as to the authenticity of the chapter still remains. Schwally, who has discussed it in connexion with xlvi–li, has pronounced against its genuineness, and the same view is taken by some other scholars. As against 1–13 even in its earliest form he argues that it cannot be authentic, not only because it contains the most general ideas which would be suitable at any time, but because it does not contain any reflection on the possibility of repentance, which is never missing in Jeremiah's prophecies, not even in those which were uttered near the end of the siege of Jerusalem (p. 184). Cornill replies that this objection overlooks the difference between the situation in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and the close of Zedekiah's reign. In the former case it was an upheaval affecting the whole of Jeremiah's world, for which Judah had no responsibility; in the latter case it was

2 Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; the which Jeremiah

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a dispute between the king of Babylon and his rebellious vassal. Moreover, after Carchemish matters had turned out quite differently from what might have been expected. It was natural to anticipate that Nebuchadnezzar would act with the same ferocity as other conquerors, and we can well understand that Jeremiah believed that at last the foe from the north had come to fulfil his long-deferred prophecies of judgement. But matters took an unexpected turn. Nebuchadnezzar after his victory at Carchemish learnt of his father's death, and had to return to Babylon, after concluding peace with Pharaoh. Thus Jeremiah, remembering the mercy of God in averting this catastrophe, could exhort his countrymen to reform even after Zedekiah had broken his oath of allegiance, whereas in 605 he had no reason to expect anything but the worst, and therefore no longer called them to repentance.

The genuineness of xxv. 15-38 is set aside on grounds similar to those which are urged against xlvi-li, and because Jeremiah is not allowed to be a prophet to the nations. Neither ground is conclusive; for the former see the discussion of those chapters, for the latter what is said in vol. i, pp. 77, 78. Cornill pointed out in his *Introduction to the Old Testament* that the figure of the goblet of Yahweh's wrath is absent from the earlier literature, but after Jeremiah's time becomes prominent. Giesebrecht, who agreed that there was a genuine Jeremianic element in the passage, replied that Cornill had overlooked Nahum iii. 11. Cornill, however, does not admit that this passage, 'Thou also shalt be drunken,' has any reference to the cup of Divine anger, and still maintains that the currency which the metaphor received after Jeremiah's time points to its Jeremianic origin. Giesebrecht in his second edition repeats his objection without any reference to Cornill's reply.

We may accordingly recognize a genuine element in both sections of the chapter. A discussion of the extent to which it has undergone editorial expansion may be left for the notes.

xxv. 1-7. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim Jeremiah reminded his people how, since the thirteenth year of Josiah, he had urged them to abandon their evil way that they might dwell in the land, but they had refused to listen.

8-11. Therefore the northern people will come against their land and the surrounding peoples, and lay the land waste, and the Babylonian supremacy shall last seventy years.

12-14. Then after seventy years the king of Babylon shall be punished, and the land of the Chaldeans shall be desolate, according to all that is written in this book; and many nations shall make them their servants. Thus Yahweh will requite them for their deeds.

the prophet spake unto all the people of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: [JS] From the 3 thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah,

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15–29. Yahweh bade me take from His hand the cup of His fury, and make the nations drink to whom He sent me. So I took the cup and made the nations drink it, beginning with Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, then Egypt and other kingdoms. He told me to bid them drink and fall, never more to rise. And if they refused I must tell them in His name that they should surely drink, for He would begin His chastisement with His own city, and they should certainly not be spared.

30–33. Yahweh will roar against Judah, and shout as in the treading of the grapes against all the inhabitants of the world. The noise of battle is heard to the end of the earth, for Yahweh is contending with all flesh. Evil goes from nation to nation; the slain of Yahweh shall lie unburied on the ground from end to end of the earth.

34–38. Let the rulers and nobles lament for their inevitable doom. Yahweh lays waste their abodes, He has left His retreat to ravage the land in anger.

xxv. 1. The synchronism in the latter part of the verse may perhaps be original, but it is absent in the LXX and is probably the insertion of an editor. For the date of Nebuchadnezzar cf. xxxii. 1, lii. 12, 2 Kings xxiv. 12, xxv. 8. Nebuchadnezzar was not actually king of Babylon when the decisive battle of Carchemish took place, but on the death of his father Nabopolassar, which occurred shortly afterwards, he succeeded to the throne. The synchronism seems to conflict with xlvi. 2. If the fourth year of Jehoiakim (604 B.C.) was the first of Nebuchadnezzar, we should apparently place the battle of Carchemish in 605, i.e. the third year of Jehoiakim. But it is very questionable if the synchronism in this verse can be trusted.

2. The LXX omits **Jeremiah the prophet,** reading simply **which he spake.** It was apparently added for the sake of clearness by a scribe who took the unnecessary precaution of explaining that Jeremiah, and not one of the three people mentioned after him, was the speaker.

3. The date, **the thirteenth year of Josiah,** is that of Jeremiah's call, as we learn from i. 2. The interval of twenty-three years was made up of nineteen under Josiah, three months under Jehoahaz, and the portion of Jehoiakim's reign which had elapsed at this time. The passage naturally suggests that during this period Jeremiah had exercised a continuous ministry, but this seems hardly to have been the case, for in the latter part of

even unto this day, these three and twenty years, the
word of the LORD hath come unto me, and I have spoken
unto you, rising up early and speaking; [S] but ye have not
4 hearkened. And the LORD hath sent unto you all his
servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them;
but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear;
5 [JS] saying, Return ye now every one from his evil way,
and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land
that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers,

Josiah's reign he appears to have kept silence. The expression accordingly ought not to be pressed.

the word of the LORD hath come unto me. This is absent in the LXX, and has apparently been introduced from i. 2. On the last clause of the verse, which similarly is absent in the LXX, see the next note.

4. This verse is rejected by several scholars as a gloss. The reference to the activity of the earlier prophets is out of place, where the question concerns the disobedience of Jeremiah's contemporaries to the message he proclaimed, for, as Cornill points out, however vain the work of earlier prophets had been, judgement would have been averted had the people repented at the preaching of Jeremiah. Besides, according to this verse the words which follow in 5, 6 are the words of Yahweh through these prophets, but 7 in its original form shows that they are Jeremiah's words, 'Ye hearkened not unto me,' as indeed we should expect from 3. With this verse we should also omit the closing words of 3, 'but ye have not hearkened,' which are omitted by the LXX, and thus restore the connexion of 5 with 3 in its original form. The verse is derived from vii. 25, 26, xi. 7, 8. The LXX continues 3 without change of subject, 'And I sent unto you all my servants.' The Hebrew 'And Yahweh sent' is clearly a correction; this confirms the view that the verse is a later insertion.

5. saying. According to the present text this must connect with 4^a; and 4^b ('but . . . hear') must be treated as a parenthesis. But when 4 and the last clause of 3 have been struck out (see preceding note), it connects with 'I have spoken unto you,' &c. in 3, and introduces the content of Jeremiah's preaching.

and dwell: expresses the consequence that will follow from obedience to the injunction; true reformation will secure the permanent enjoyment of the land, which in Yahweh's original intention had been allotted to them as their perpetual inheritance.

the LORD hath given. The LXX 'I have given' is probably

from of old and even for evermore: and go not after other 6
gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke
me not to anger with the work of your hands; and I will
do you no hurt. Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, 7
saith the LORD; that ye might provoke me to anger with
the work of your hands to your own hurt. [J] Therefore 8

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not to be preferred. It is a correction of the Hebrew, carrying out more consistently the consequences of the insertion of 4, in which Yahweh is represented as the speaker.

6. Cornill treats this as an insertion, on the ground that the close of 5 forms a natural conclusion to the summary of the prophet's message, after which nothing more is to be expected. Duhm retains it, regarding the idea that the pre-exilic people was completely given up to idolatry as characteristic of the later supplementers of the book, to whom he assigns this chapter. It is not necessary, however, to strike it out, even if we hold fast a genuine Jeremianic element in the passage. Cornill's argument for deletion is quite inadequate, and Duhm's bias against the authenticity of passages which denounce idolatry suffers from exaggeration. But the text needs correction. For 'provoke me not,' in which the LXX agrees with the Hebrew, we should read 'provoke not Yahweh,' the abbreviated form of the Divine name being misread as the pronominal suffix. Jeremiah thus continues to speak in his own person. Similarly at the close of the verse we should substitute for 'and I will do you no hurt' the closing words of 7, 'to your own hurt' (see note on that verse).

7. The whole of the verse, with the exception of 'Yet ye have not hearkened unto me,' should be struck out, with the LXX. The insertion of 'saith the LORD' has been occasioned by the mistaken idea that Yahweh was the speaker; the rest of the verse is simply a variant of 6^b, for which, however, we may be grateful since it has preserved the correct text of the closing words 'to your own hurt.' By the aid of the LXX we have thus been enabled to restore a consistent text in which Jeremiah is the sole speaker and Yahweh is throughout referred to in the third person.

unto me: i. e. Jeremiah.

8. Such then has been the tragic history of the prophet's ministry. For three and twenty years he has spoken to his people the message of Yahweh, bidding them repent and turn from their evil doings and idolatrous practices. But they have not listened to his words. What then remains? The day of grace is past, the invitation to return is extended no longer. Yahweh Himself now pronounces the doom which such obstinate disobedi-

thus saith the LORD of hosts: Because ye have not heard
9 my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and *I will send* unto Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about; and

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ence has so richly merited. The foe from the north, whose coming has been so long foretold, will now come indeed, and inflict the uttermost vengeance on the rebellious nation, in whose downfall the surrounding nations will be involved.

9. all the families: cf. i. 15. The LXX omits 'all' and reads the singular (cf. v. 15, vi. 22); the Hebrew is preferable, since the omission of 'all' in the Greek was probably due to its similarity to the following word, and the plural pronominal suffix ('them') favours a plural antecedent. On the other hand, the LXX is probably right in omitting 'saith the LORD,' which is unnecessary in an utterance of Yahweh.

and I will send . . . my servant. This is rightly omitted by the LXX. The Hebrew is very awkward, and the subordinate position assigned to Nebuchadnezzar is hardly what we should expect.

my servant: so called as the instrument of Yahweh's vengeance, not of course as a worshipper of Yahweh. It is noteworthy that the LXX omits the title when applied to Nebuchadnezzar elsewhere in the book (xxvii. 6, xliii. 10), probably because the translator objected to the designation of an idolater by so honourable a title.

and against all these nations round about. Schwally, Bleeker, and Duhm strike out the whole clause. But while the prophet is naturally thinking of Judah in the first instance, the political situation drew the surrounding peoples with it. Jeremiah, it is true, seems, if this clause is genuine, to trace the overthrow of these nations to the guilt of Judah. But this is not unexampled: the storm which threatened to overwhelm Jonah, who represents Israel, and the heathen sailors in a common destruction, was due solely to Jonah's sin; and a similar attitude is observable elsewhere. Jeremiah, like other prophets, was preoccupied with the sin of his own people and its punishment; apparently he felt no problem to be raised by the overthrow of other peoples which he expected to accompany it. We should, however, follow the LXX in omitting 'these,' and read simply 'the nations round about,' especially as the only nations hitherto mentioned are 'the families of the north,' who of course are not intended.

I will [a] utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. More- 10

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[a] Heb. *devote.*

I will utterly destroy them. The Hebrew means 'I will put them under the ban,' the ban being a sacred vow by which its object was devoted to utter destruction. Thus Achan brought disaster on Israel by 'a trespass in the devoted thing,' having appropriated gold, silver, and raiment from the spoil of Jericho (Joshua vii); while Saul is represented as rejected by God because he had not carried out the ban upon Amalek, but had spared Agag and the choicest of the spoil (1 Sam. xv). The expression is often used with reference to the extermination of Canaanites in Deuteronomy and Joshua. It is questionable, however, whether the text is correct. The LXX reads 'I will make them desolate,' which involves the change of a single consonant. It is not quite easy to choose between them, since, as Cornill points out, both verbs occur elsewhere in the book only in the non-Jeremianic section l, li. He prefers the LXX, on the ground that the same root frequently occurs in Jeremiah, while the root of the alternative word does not occur.

desolations. The LXX reads 'reproach': cf. xxiii. 40, xxiv. 9. In xxix. 18 the same three nouns, 'an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach,' are combined. It is on the whole probable that we should read 'reproach' here. It is true that we might suspect assimilation to xxix. 18; but in view of the similarity of the two words it is unlikely that the change is to be accounted for in this way, and it is much more likely that 'reproach' was changed into 'desolations' under the influence of the verb 'I will make them desolate' which occurs just before (see preceding note).

10. For the former part of the verse cf. vii. 34, xvi. 9, xxxiii. 11. But here we have a significant addition. For the voice of mirth and gladness, or of the bridegroom and the bride, might be hushed when the land was still thronged with inhabitants. The absence of joyful song and the sound of merriment would mean that a great sorrow was brooding over the people when feasting and marriage could not fitly be celebrated. But in times of the deepest dejection the urgent physical needs must be satisfied, the hand-mill must grind the daily supply of corn, the lamp must be lit as the darkness closes in. The sound of the grinding, which can be heard at a distance in the early morning, is the invariable sign of human life in the East, and even in the poorest home the lamp is indispensable. The deathly stillness when the harsh sound of the mill no longer falls on the ear, the darkness in which no light glimmers from the cottage, are infallible tokens that the land has been

over I will [a] take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the
11 light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall

[a] Heb. *cause to perish from them.*

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stripped of its inhabitants. It is with the instinct of genius that the poet has seized on the absence of these signs to indicate the fate which is to overtake Judah and the surrounding peoples. In the Revelation of John the same signs are borrowed to describe the desolation of Babylon, i.e. Rome (xviii. 22, 23).

millstones. The hand-mill consisted of two stones; the 'nether millstone' was stationary, the upper revolved upon it, being often turned by two women (Matt. xxiv. 41, Luke xvii. 35), one of whom fed the mill with her right hand through the hole in the upper stone. Deut. xxiv. 6 forbids the mill or the upper millstone to be taken in pledge, 'for he taketh a man's life to pledge,' so indispensable was it to the provision of the daily bread. The LXX reads 'scent of myrrh.' The word rendered 'millstones' is the dual of a word very similar to that for 'scent,' and the Greek words for 'myrrh' and 'mill' are also very similar. The reading has no claim to be considered as original, but it apparently arose from both the causes mentioned, not simply from the latter.

candle: rather **lamp,** as the R.V. usually renders.

11. and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. This is a difficult passage. The LXX reads simply 'And they shall serve among the nations seventy years.' It is probable that it correctly represents the original text in its omission of 'these' and 'the king of Babylon,' also that a retranslation of its text gives us the original Hebrew. It is questionable, however, whether the Greek translator rightly understood it. The Hebrew verb is used with the preposition rendered 'among' in the sense 'to use as subjects' (literally 'to serve with:' Duhm compares the expression 'to work with cattle,' or 'work by means of'). The phrase occurs in 14, where it is rendered 'shall serve themselves of:' cf. xxvii. 7, xxx. 8, Ezek. xxxiv. 27, in xxii. 13 to use the service of. If this sense is to be maintained here, we must take the meaning to be that the foe out of the north will enslave the nations and keep them in bondage for seventy years. Against this it may be urged that the natural subject of the verb is not 'the families of the north,' though with this translation they alone are suitable. Cornill argues forcibly that the LXX gives the true meaning, and that we need not combine the verb and preposition in the sense serve the king of Babylon seventy years. [S] And it 1

'to use as slaves,' but take the verb as used absolutely (as e.g. in ii. 20, 'I will not serve'), and the preposition as used in its local sense 'among.' We thus learn what becomes of the inhabitants who have been torn from their homes: they are doomed to slavery among the nations. The Hebrew text may have arisen through the desire to provide the verb with a subject, other passages perhaps co-operating (e.g. xxvii. 7), and 'the king of Babylon' was inserted to provide the verb with an object.

The prediction that the captivity would last seventy years is suspected as non-Jeremianic by many scholars, including some who regard the chapter as a whole as Jeremiah's, and admit his authorship of the similar prediction in xxix. 10. It is remarkable that the latter passage was written several years later, in the reign of Zedekiah, and that the same number is mentioned there as here. But we need not be disturbed by this discrepancy, unless we insist that the number was meant to be taken literally. More probably we must regard it as a round number, just as the same period is described in xxvii. 7 as embracing the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar 'and his son, and his son's son.' Duhm considers that the author took it from Zech. i. 12, 'how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?' (cf. vii. 5). But it is more likely that Zechariah's reference to the seventy years was occasioned by his acquaintance with Jeremiah's prophecy. The angel of Yahweh enforces his plea by the reminder that the seventy years which had been laid down in prophecy as the period of Jerusalem's humiliation had now expired. In any case the actual duration of the captivity was less than seventy years, if we assume that the first return of Jews took place in 536 B.C. Nor did the Babylonian supremacy last quite seventy years. Had the representation of the subjection to Babylon as lasting seventy years originated in the post-exilic period, we should have expected a closer agreement with history. At the same time it is not unlikely that the clause did not originally belong to this context, if the reconstruction of the original close of the oracle suggested in the next note is correct.

12-14. This passage is regarded by many scholars as a later insertion, and was so treated even by Graf (along with 11^b) and by Hitzig (except for 14^b), who had been preceded by not a few critics, while others rejected only 13. Orelli still substantially defends their authenticity, apart from 13^b. A prophecy of Babylon's overthrow is not in place here. It is true that it does not link on badly to 11^b, which, while it predicts a long captivity, suggests that a turn of fortune, such as the overthrow of Babylon, is to come at the end of seventy years. But it disastrously disturbs shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished,

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the connexion with 15 ff., which, introduced as it is by 'For,' must follow immediately on a prophecy of the overthrow of Judah and the surrounding peoples. Moreover, 13 in its present form is exposed to additional objections. It is quite unexampled for the prophet in the course of his prophecy to refer to himself in the third person, and the language implies that a book of prophecies containing the oracle on Babylon, presumably l–li. 58, lay before the writer. But this oracle on Babylon is not from the pen of Jeremiah, and even li. 59 ff. contains a narrative from the time of Zedekiah, whereas our chapter belongs to the reign of Jehoiakim. As a whole then 12–14 must be regarded as a later insertion. But the question must still be raised whether the whole passage needs to be struck out. While some scholars treat 13 as itself an insertion within an insertion, Schwally and Cornill have argued that part of it belongs to the original structure, to which it is also referred by Rothstein. It is obvious that the closing words, with their reference to Jeremiah in the third person, cannot be part of the prophecy. But the LXX is probably correct in taking them as the title of the prophecies against the foreign nations (xlvi–li), which once stood here in the Hebrew text as they do now in the LXX. If we take out the words 'What Jeremiah prophesied concerning the nations' (omitting 'all,' with the LXX), the rest of the verse might belong to Jeremiah's prophecy if we supposed the original reference in 'that land' to have been to Judah rather than to Babylon. In this case the 'book' will presumably be the book in which Jeremiah had collected his prophecies during the three and twenty years of his ministry, i. e. the roll written at his dictation by Baruch and burnt by Jehoiakim. We may thus assume that in its original form this section of the chapter closed with 11^{a}, 13^{ab}: 'And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and I will bring upon this land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book.' We have thus a conclusion which better corresponds to the beginning, in which Jeremiah speaks of the words he has for so long been proclaiming to his people. And the vision of the wine-cup links well to the passage in this restored form.

12. The verse should run in the briefer form presupposed by the LXX, 'And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish (Heb. visit) that nation; and I will make it desolate for ever.' The verse is based on xxix. 10, where Yahweh promises to 'visit' His people, i.e. in mercy. The author of this verse keeps the same word, but uses it in the sense to 'punish.' The expression 'desolate for ever' is literally 'perpetual desolations;' it comes apparently from the oracle on that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it [a] desolate for ever. [J] And 13 I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, [R] which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. [S] For many nations and great kings [b] shall serve 14 themselves of them, even of them: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the work of their hands.

[J] For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto me: 15

[a] Heb. *everlasting desolations.*

[b] Or, *have served themselves* or, *made bondmen*

Babylon, li. 26, 62: cf. xlix. 33, Ezek. xxxv. 9 (from which it may have been originally derived).

13. See note on 12–14.

14. Since the closing words of 13 constitute in the LXX a title to xlvi–li, which immediately follows, there is no place for 14 and it is omitted. But inasmuch as the oracles against the foreign nations once stood in the same position in the Hebrew text, we may infer that 14 and 12, which is inseparably connected with it, were introduced into the Hebrew text after xlvi–li had been removed to the end of the book. 14^a is derived from xxvii. 7^b. Hitzig took 14^b to be the continuation of 11^a, but Graf pointed out in reply that the expressions in it seemed to be borrowed from the oracle on Babylon, l. 29, li. 24: cf. l. 15, li. 6, 56.

serve themselves of them. This expression occurs in xxii. 13, where it is rendered 'to use the service of;' it means here to employ them as slaves: so xxvii. 11, xxx. 8. See note on 11.

15. We now come to the striking vision of the wine-cup of Yahweh's fury, which is linked closely to the preceding section by 'For' (naturally omitted by the LXX). Duhm recognizes that the conception itself is worthy of a Jeremiah, and that the passage itself would be if the author's gift of expression had been on a level with the conception. This objection may perhaps be met by the elimination of insertions; Duhm's further objection that the conception itself cannot be Jeremiah's, since he was no prophet to the nations, has been sufficiently dealt with already (see vol. i, pp. 77, 78). The giving of the draught to the nations can be thought of only as a transaction in the mind of the prophet, since an actual visit to the nations is out of the question, and like the

Take the cup of the wine of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.
16 And they shall drink, and reel to and fro, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.
17 Then took I the cup at the LORD's hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me:
18 [JS] *towit*, Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah, and the kings

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view that he gave the wine to their assembled ambassadors, could occur only to a degraded literalism. It is not, however, a mere allegory, but a psychic experience, in which Jeremiah really seems to himself to be forcing the goblet on the nations which he enumerates. It thus falls into the same category as similar instances in Ezekiel.

the wine of this fury. The second noun is in apposition to the first, explaining what 'the wine' really is. The LXX reads 'of this unmixed wine' (cf. Ps. lxxv. 8), and Duhm and Erbt prefer this. Cornill thinks no explanation was needed, and that one of the words should be struck out. Since no one would have thought of inserting 'wine' if the original text had been 'cup of fury,' he reads 'take this cup of wine.' Rothstein goes a step further, and reads simply 'take this cup,' impoverishing the description for the prosaic scruple that the cup does not actually contain wine. He compares Isa. li. 21, 'drunken, but not with wine.'

16. The effects caused by the drinking of this mystic wine are now described. The nations reel under the shock of disaster, and are helpless in perplexity and dismay. At the close of the verse the figure is spoiled by the intrusion of the reality, if the sword intended is that of the foe; and even if it be 'the sword of the Lord,' the unity of the description is disturbed by this alien element. It should therefore be omitted. It has been inserted probably from 27.

18–26. The following list can hardly in its present form be attributed to Jeremiah. An enumeration of the peoples to which the cup was given is quite in place, but the list has been swollen by later additions. In 20 the LXX omits 'and all the kings of the land of Uz;' in 24 either 'and all the kings of Arabia' or 'and all the kings of the mingled people;' in 25 'and all the kings of Zimri.' In each case the LXX is probably correct. Since all are characterized by the phrase 'and all the kings of,' Giesebrecht, with the concurrence of Cornill, uses this phrase as a criterion of additions. The original catalogue he takes to have included Judah, Egypt, Philistia, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tema, Buz, and

thereof, and the princes thereof, to make them a desolation, an astonishment, an hissing, and a curse; as it is
this day; Pharaoh king of Egypt, and his servants, and his 19
princes, and all his people; and all the mingled people, 20
and all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of
the land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Gaza, and

'those that have the corners *of their hair* polled.' In several cases the phrase 'all the kings of' has no very intelligible meaning, for it is prefixed to cities or countries which had only one king. Besides we have 'all the kings of the Philistines' mentioned, and then in addition to them 'Ashkelon, and Gaza, and Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod,' i.e. Philistia is enumerated twice.

18. The closing words, 'as it is this day,' must be an addition, made after the State had been overthrown and Jerusalem laid in ruins. It is possible that they were inserted by Jeremiah himself or Baruch, but hardly probable, for they are not in the LXX. Perhaps all after 'Judah' is an insertion; 'the kings thereof' is suspicious. Cornill, who takes this view, thinks that originally Pharaoh headed the list. This would correspond to the historical fact that he was the protagonist in the conflict with Babylon, and it was his defeat at Carchemish which formed the decisive turning-point in the history of the period. Judah had only a subordinate part to play, her fate depended on that of Egypt. If this were the original order, the placing of Judah at the head of the list would be due to a scribe who did not tolerate that his country should be anything but first—even in punishment.

19. If the view that 'all the kings of' is in each case a sign of later insertion is correct, Egypt is the only one of the heathen nations whose king is mentioned. But that is quite natural in view of the tremendous significance attaching to his overthrow (see preceding note). The princes are perhaps the petty kings of Egypt who regarded the Pharaoh as their suzerain.

20. and all the mingled people. This clause (deleted by Giesebrecht and by Cheyne, *Enc. Bib.* 3099) should go with the preceding verse: it includes the foreigners who had settled in Egypt, who while retaining their own nationality were subject to Egyptian rule.

and all the kings of the land of Uz. This clause is omitted in the LXX, and its position in the enumeration is surprising. It is apparently an insertion. On the situation of Uz see the editor's note on Job i. 1, also on 23 in the present chapter. It was closely connected with Edom.

and all the kings of the land of the Philistines. The LXX

21 Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod; Edom, and Moab, and
22 the children of Ammon; and all the kings of Tyre, and
all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the [a]isle which is be-
23 yond the sea; Dedan, and Tema, and Buz, and all that have

[a] †Or, *coastland*

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omits 'the land of,' but the whole clause is an insertion, since it duplicates in a summary way what follows. Of the five cities of the Philistines Gath is not mentioned. Amos (i. 6-8) similarly omits it, and the same is true of Zeph. ii. 4, Zech. ix. 5, 6.

the remnant of Ashdod. This Philistine city had, we learn from Herodotus (ii. 157), been captured and destroyed by Psammetichus (king of Egypt 666–610 B. C.) about a quarter of a century previously, after a siege of twenty-nine years. The 'remnant' means the few miserable survivors. 'We can imagine that he would not be disposed to lenient dealings with the town upon its capture' (Cheyne, in the *Pulpit Commentary*). The town was in existence again in the age of Nehemiah, who complacently plumes himself on the ferocity with which he treated his countrymen who had married women of Ashdod, and whose 'children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language' (Neh. xiii. 23 ff.). The city was captured in the Maccabean period by Judas Maccabaeus (1 Macc. v. 68), and again by Jonathan (1 Macc. x. 84), but it is not reasonable to suppose that the reference is to either of these events.

22. This verse is struck out by Giesebrecht and Cornill on the ground already mentioned, of the formula 'all the kings of.' The omission of Phoenicia may seem surprising, but it is absent from the list in ix. 25, and from xlvi–li. The 'coastland which is beyond the sea' seems, on account of its association with Tyre and Zidon, to be the Phoenician colonies in the Mediterranean Sea and on its coasts. The LXX reads simply 'the kings beyond the sea.'

23. Dedan and Tema were North-Arabian tribes, which are mentioned as neighbours in Isa. xxi. 13, 14. The latter, which is also referred to in Job vi. 19, where it is coupled with Sheba, is according to Gen. xxv. 15 an Ishmaelite clan. Its home was about 250 miles to the south-east of Edom, and is to be identified with Teima. Dedan (xlix. 8, where it is connected with Edom: cf. Ezek. xxv. 13) is described in Gen. x. 7 along with Sheba, with which it is elsewhere associated (Ezek. xxxviii. 13), as a Hamitic people of Cushite stock. It is referred to as a trading people in Ezek. xxvii. 15, 20. Buz, according to Gen. xxii. 21, is represented as a son of Nahor and brother of Uz, and Gen. x. 23 makes Uz a son of Aram. These data point to Naharina as the home of

the corners *of their hair* polled; [S] and all the kings of 24
Arabia, and all the kings of the mingled people that
dwell in the wilderness; and all the kings of Zimri, and all 25

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both. But other data connect Uz with Edom (especially Gen. xxxvi. 28, Lam. iv. 21, and the fact that Job's friend Eliphaz was a Temanite), and the present verse strongly favours a similar situation for Buz, to which Elihu belonged (Job xxxii. 2). On the whole question see the note on Job i. 1. For the 'corner-clipped' people see on ix. 26.

24. In the unpointed Hebrew text 'and all the kings of Arabia' is identical with 'and all the kings of the mingled people,' so that of the two clauses one should be struck out as due to mistaken repetition. The LXX read only one, taking it in the sense of the latter. 'The mingled people' is a term difficult to interpret in this connexion; on the analogy of 20 it should mean people of foreign stock who lived among the tribes just mentioned. But we should adopt the other clause, reading the verse 'And all the kings of Arāb that dwell in the wilderness.' The rendering 'Arabia' is unfortunate, since all that is covered by the term here is one or more tribes in North Arabia. It never in the O.T. means Arabia in our sense of the term. We may perhaps illustrate this passage from Isa. xxi. 13, but it is dubious whether the word there is a proper name. The whole verse is treated as an insertion by Cornill; Giesebrecht retains 'and the Arabs who dwell in the wilderness.'

25, 26. The rest of the description is struck out by Giesebrecht and Cornill, not merely on account of the formula 'and all the kings of,' but to some extent on the LXX evidence, and largely on the ground of contents. The wider and wider sweep of the enumeration stamps the verses as coloured by the later eschatology.

and all the kings of Zimri. This is absent in the LXX. Zimri is quite unknown; it has commonly been identified with Zimran, the son of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. xxv. 2). But this is very dubious, nor do the cuneiform inscriptions give us any trustworthy information. Curiously it is marked as east of the Tigris on the map of Syria, Assyria, and Babylonia in the *Enc. Bib.*, and on the map of Mesopotamia. Duhm makes the interesting suggestion that the word may be a cypher for a name at which the writer only dared to hint, such as 'Romans,' which has the same numerical value. This, however, would imply a very late date for the insertion, and although we have a cypher in the next verse, it is not natural to look for one here. If the text is correct, we must resign ourselves to ignorance. Gomer (Ezek. xxxviii. 6) would be an easy emendation, but it is doubtful whether it would be suitable here, in spite of the eschatological hue of the passage.

26 the kings of Elam, and all the kings of the Medes; and all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another; and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of [a] Sheshach shall drink

[a] According to ancient tradition, a cypher for *Babel.* See ch. li. 41.

Since this note was written the editor has seen that Rost and Peiser had previously suggested the same emendation in the form 'Gomeri' or 'Gimirri.'

Elam: see on xlix. 34. It lay beyond the Tigris, east of Babylonia, south of Assyria and Media, and reaching to the Persian Gulf on the south. Its combination with Media here is interesting in the light of Isa. xxi. 2, which was probably written shortly before the capture of Babylon by Cyrus. Cf. also Isa. xxii. 6.

all the kings of the north. This is not a very suitable addition, since the 'families of the north' are those who are the agents of Divine vengeance, but it is accounted for by the eschatological interest, which is still more evident in the following clause in which a universal judgement is announced, whereas a selection of nations is implied in the prophet's commission: 'the nations to whom I send thee' (15, cf. 17).

one with another. The words may be taken with 'far and near' to mean whether they are near to or far from one another, or they may mean one after another.

of the world. The LXX omits this. It is not only unnecessary but ungrammatical in the Hebrew.

and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. Sheshach is a secret mode of writing Babel: cf. li. 41. The cypher employed here and in li. 1, 41 is known as *Atbash*, since the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet was interchanged with the first, the last but one with the second, the last but two with the third, and so on. When thus interpreted Sheshach is read Babel. It is employed here either because at the time this verse was inserted it was dangerous to speak of the fall of Babylon in plain language, or because the writer had the apocalyptic fondness for mysterious designations. In view of the freedom with which Babylon is mentioned in prophecies of its downfall towards the close of the exile, and especially of the use of Babel in the same breath with Sheshach in li. 41, the former motive seems not to have operated. We may accordingly assume that it was chosen under the latter impulse, but also because the name contained in itself a congenial suggestion. To the Hebrew ear the name would suggest 'humiliation.' The clause cannot well have belonged to Jeremiah's original prophecy, though it may be granted that some of the objections which may be urged against 12, 14 are not applicable here, and it

after them. And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith 27
the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Drink ye, and be
drunken, and spue, and fall, and rise no more, because
of the sword which **I** will send among you. And it shall 28
be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink,
then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of

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is by no means incredible that Jeremiah, who anticipated a restoration for his people after seventy years, should have appended a prophecy of Babylon's overthrow. It is not likely, however, that he would have done so at the time when the prophecy was first written, or on its republication after the destruction of the roll. It is, moreover, probable that the clause was not written by Jeremiah at all. The objection that after the enumeration of the lands which have to drink the cup has been closed by the general statements in the earlier part of the verse, it is unfitting that a definite kingdom should be mentioned, is of little moment. For it lies in the nature of the case that if Babylon is the instrument of this universal judgement, the king of Babylon must be the last to drink; and it is the very opposite of unfitting that he should be definitely mentioned at the close, corresponding to Pharaoh at the beginning of the list. And this argument has no weight if we have already denied to Jeremiah the rest of the verse. All we could infer from it, if it were sound, would be that the last clause of 26 was not from the same hand as the rest of the verse; but unless we claim the earlier part of the verse for Jeremiah, it has no bearing on the Jeremianic origin of its conclusion. Nevertheless this is rendered improbable by its absence from the LXX, by the connexion of the passage with l-li, and by the use of a cypher which smacks of apocalyptic rather than prophecy, and is unexampled in Jeremiah's genuine writings. How old the Atbash cypher is we do not know.

27–29. It is surprising, after we have learnt in 17 that the prophet had made all the nations drink to whom Yahweh had sent him, to find the drinking regarded as something still lying in the future, which the nations may try to resist. Moreover from 17 onwards Jeremiah is the speaker, while here it is Yahweh, though no indication of the change is given. It would largely meet these difficulties if we could transpose these verses and bring them into connexion with 15, 16. And the points of contact between 16 and 27 may seem to favour this. We must not press the 'unaesthetic description' in 27 against Jeremianic authorship, in view of such passages as Isa. xxviii. 8, Hos. vii. 5, to say nothing of 2 Pet. ii. 3, and the caution we need constantly to bear in mind that we must not apply our canons of taste to ancient authors. But 28, 29 can

29 hosts: Ye shall surely drink. For, lo, I begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name, and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished: for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the
30 earth, saith the LORD of hosts. Therefore prophesy thou

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hardly be from the pen of Jeremiah. The thought that the nations might refuse to drink is in itself strange, in view of the visionary character of the experience. We have at the close of 29 the same universal scope of the judgement which we have met with in 26. But even more incompatible with Jeremiah's attitude is the point of view from which 29 is written. Is it credible that the prophet, who proclaims with such tremendous energy the inexcusable character of Judah's sin, and represents it as unparalleled among the heathen (ii. 10, 11), should have said that since Judah was punished, the nations should not escape? The language suggests, if it does not imply, a favouritism towards Israel which the pre-exilic prophets from Amos onwards earnestly oppose. It is written rather from the standpoint represented by the Second Isaiah, from which Judah was regarded as relatively innocent in contrast with the heathen, though the great prophet of the exile drew a different inference. He says that the sufferings of the comparatively innocent' Israel are vicariously borne to atone for the guilt of the heathen. The author of 28, 29 regards it as intolerable that Judah should suffer alone; if Judah is punished, *a fortiori* the rest of the world. In xlix. 12 the thought recurs in a form still more extreme. But 28, 29 cannot stand alone, they need 27. Verses 27–29, however, cannot very well be thrust in before 17 ff., and the last clause of 27 is as inconsistent with Jeremiah's authorship in this verse as in 16. Accordingly it is best to regard 27-29 as a later insertion unskilfully made at an inappropriate point.

29. which is called by my name: see vii. 10.

30–38. A more poetical style is here resumed, but grave doubts may be urged against Jeremiah's authorship of the passage. It is very imitative in character, and the eschatological tendency is very pronounced.

30. The opening of the poem seems to have been imitated from Amos i. 2, 'Yahweh shall roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem' (cf. Joel iii. 16). Amos continues, 'and the pastures of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.' This may have suggested the word rendered 'fold' (marg. 'pasture') and the mention of the 'shepherds' later in the passage. Here, however, Yahweh utters His lion-like roar 'from on high,' 'from His holy habitation,' i. e. from His heavenly temple. He

against them all these words, and say unto them, The
LORD shall roar from on high, and utter his voice from
his holy habitation; he shall mightily roar against his
[a]fold; he shall give a shout, as they that tread *the*
grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. A noise 31
shall come even to the end of the earth; for the LORD
hath a controversy with the nations, he will plead with all
flesh; as for the wicked, he will give them to the sword,
saith the LORD.

Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, evil shall go 32

[a] Or, *pasture*

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thunders against His pasture or homestead, i. e. the land of Judah, where His flock is feeding. In the latter part of the verse the figure changes and the judgement embraces all the earth. Instead of the lion roaring against the homestead, we have the vintage shout of the grape traders. The word rendered 'shout' which bears this particular application is used similarly in the oracle on Moab, Isa. xvi. 10, and in its expansion Jer. xlviii. 33. Here it is a vintage shout, but Yahweh is treading human grapes, and the wine is the blood of men, as in Lam. i. 15 and the powerful but terrible description of the judgement on Edom in Isa. lxiii. 1-6. See further on xlviii. 33. According to the present text, it is all the inhabitants of the earth that are in Yahweh's winepress, but Duhm may be right in regarding this clause, which has no parallel line, as an insertion. In any case the universal scope of the judgement is attested by what follows.

31. Cf. Isa. iii. 13, 14. The noise is apparently the crash of battle which resounds to the ends of the earth. The last clause does not mean that the wicked among the heathen are to be given to the sword, for the judgement falls on the heathen as such. Judah is involved in the catastrophe, but possibly the writer may intend to suggest that righteous Jews will not be slain. For 'plead' we should substitute 'contend' (see ii. 9).

32. The latter part of the verse is taken from vi. 22, but 'tempest' is substituted for 'nation:' cf. xxiii. 19, xxx. 23. Duhm thinks the meaning is that at the instigation of Yahweh one people falls on another, till all are destroyed. But perhaps the words mean no more than that the storm of judgement strikes one nation after another. The instrument of judgement is a foe from the uttermost parts of the earth, a phrase which probably bears a different sense here than in vi. 22, the author's geographical horizon being more remote. He has no definite people in his mind,

forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest shall be
33 raised up from the uttermost parts of the earth. And the
slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the
earth even unto the other end of the earth: they shall
not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried; they
34 shall be dung upon the face of the ground. Howl, ye
shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves *in ashes*, ye
principal of the flock: for the days of your slaughter are
fully come, [a] and I will break you in pieces, and ye shall
35 fall like a pleasant vessel. And [b] the shepherds shall

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[a] Or, *and I will disperse you* Many ancient versions read, *and your dispersions.* [b] Heb. *flight shall perish from the shepherds, and escape from &c.*

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but it was natural to suppose that the unknown races which dwelt on the earth's rim might play the part the Scythians were expected in earlier periods to play.

33. In 'that day,' the apocalyptic Day of the Lord, 'the slain of Yahweh' (Isa. lxvi. 16) will lie strewn on the ground, right across the world; none will survive to utter the lamentation, to perform the last offices.

34. The 'shepherds' are, as often elsewhere, the rulers; the 'principal of the flock' are their chief subjects.

wallow yourselves: cf. vi. 26.

and I will break you in pieces. The form in the text is anomalous, and the versions give no satisfactory sense. Probably 'to break in pieces' is the sense intended rather than 'to scatter,' which is unsuitable to the context, while the alternative sense does suit the reference to the pleasant vessel. Since the latter, however, is due to a textual corruption (see next note), we should probably strike out the word, which is not read by the LXX.

a pleasant vessel. The shattering of a costly vessel is in itself a very appropriate metaphor, but it can hardly be correct here, since it introduces an incongruous element, and this applies also to Graetz's emendation 'a vessel of clay' (cf. xviii, xiii. 13, 14). The passage throughout employs the metaphor of a flock and its shepherds, and the LXX reads 'rams' instead of 'vessel.' Two easy emendations of the Hebrew would be possible on this basis, but it would be better to read with Duhm 'rams of slaughter.' He compares 'flock of slaughter,' Zech. xi. 4, 7, all the more that he thinks this portion of Zechariah served the author as a model in other respects.

35. Based on Amos ii. 14.

have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to
escape. A voice of the cry of the shepherds, and the 36
howling of the principal of the flock! for the LORD
layeth waste their pasture. And the peaceable folds are 37
brought to silence because of the fierce anger of the
LORD. He hath forsaken his covert, as the lion: for 38
their land is become an astonishment because of [a] the
fierceness of the oppressing *sword*, and because of his
fierce anger.

[B] In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son **26**

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[a] †Or, according to some ancient authorities, *the oppressing sword* See ch. xlvi. 16.

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36. Cf. Zech. xi. 3.

38. The text seems to mean either that Yahweh has been forced by the devastation of Judah to abandon His land, just as the lion is forced by the destruction of his lair, or that He has left His 'holy habitation' to lay waste the earth, as a lion leaves his lair to attack the flock. But the thought is in either case very imperfectly expressed, and we should, with most recent commentators, strike out the particle of comparison and read 'the lion leaves his covert' or 'lions leave their covert,' i.e. the lions are forced out of their lairs by the destruction of the jungle: cf. Zech. xi. 3.

the fierceness of the oppressing sword. The Hebrew is incorrect. The margin gives the true reading, which is that of the LXX and Targum and some Hebrew MSS., is attested by xlvi. 16, l. 16, and involves a very slight change in the Hebrew.

and because of his fierce anger. This clause is omitted in the LXX, but is required by the parallelism. The pronoun has, it is true, no antecedent; perhaps none was felt to be needed; but the defect is readily remedied if we read 'the fierce anger of Yahweh,' as in 37, which with the abbreviated form of the Divine name would be very like the present text.

XXVI. JEREMIAH, AT GRAVE RISK OF HIS LIFE, THREATENS THAT THE TEMPLE WILL BE DESTROYED.

With this chapter we begin a series of extracts from the biography of Jeremiah, which we may with confidence assign to Baruch, and which with some interruptions extend to xlv. This is not to say that the biography has not been used for earlier sections of the book, but from this point it is the leading source.

of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word from the LORD,

The narrative in the present chapter refers, as most critics recognize, to the same occasion as that on which the address recorded in vii was delivered. Both contain the emphatic declaration that unless the people amend their ways Yahweh will make the Temple like Shiloh, and both represent the address as delivered to all Judah at the Temple itself. While vii reproduces the address itself, xxvi is mainly occupied with the circumstances in which it was delivered, especially its sequel. It is of great importance for the light it throws on the prophet's fidelity to his mission, which led him to face the extreme consequences, and on the attitude to the temple which characterized the official and popular religion of the time. The chronological note at the beginning is valuable, in view of the weighty character of the address. There is no occasion to doubt its accuracy, according to which we should date the event in 608 B.C. or thereabouts. Duhm thinks of Jehoiakim's coronation. At that time the crisis was over. Josiah, it is true, was dead, Jehoahaz dethroned, the suzerainty of Egypt established. Yet the State remained, the dynasty of David held the throne, the people were still suffered to dwell in their own country and their own homes. The Temple stood, they could still look at it as a fetish guaranteeing their security (vii. 4), and declare that they were delivered (vii. 10). A somewhat later date, however, would also fit these conditions. The coronation day would not be the time most appropriate for such an address, and had it been delivered then, we might have expected Baruch to mention it explicitly.

xxvi. 1–6. Yahweh bids the prophet stand in the Temple court and proclaim to Judah His word, since repentance may avert the punishment He purposes to inflict. He is to tell them that unless they hearken to His word, He will make the Temple like Shiloh, and Jerusalem a curse to all nations.

7–9. When Jeremiah had delivered his message, the priests and prophets threatened him with death for proclaiming the destruction of the Temple and city.

10–15. The priests and prophets accuse Jeremiah to the princes and people as worthy of death for prophesying against Jerusalem. Jeremiah replies that Yahweh has bidden him speak all these words. He exhorts them to amend their life, in which case Yahweh will repent of the evil He has spoken. As for himself, they must act as they think well; only if they kill him they will bring innocent blood on themselves and the city, since all he has spoken he has been commanded by Yahweh to speak.

16–19. The princes and the people decide that Jeremiah is not worthy of death, since he has spoken in Yahweh's name. Some

saying, Thus saith the LORD: Stand in the court of the 2
LORD'S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah,
which come to worship in the LORD'S house, all the words
that I command thee to speak unto them; keep not back
a word. It may be they will hearken, and turn every 3

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of the elders remind the people that Micah had foretold the destruction of the city and Temple. But Hezekiah, so far from putting him to death, besought Yahweh's mercy and the punishment was averted.

20–24. Uriah similarly prophesied against Jerusalem and Judah. Jehoiakim sought to kill him, but he escaped into Egypt. Thereupon Jehoiakim sent to Egypt to fetch him, and when he was brought back killed him. Ahikam, however, protected Jeremiah, so that he was not put to death.

1. It is characteristic of Baruch to insert dates at the beginning of his narratives, so that we are far better informed with reference to the time at which many of the events occurred than with reference to the dates at which several of the discourses were uttered.

came this word. The Syriac adds 'to Jeremiah.' The LXX agrees with the Hebrew in omitting it, and its insertion by the Syriac is easy to account for, since the passage is abrupt without it; but this very abruptness is itself a reason for regarding the words as original, and their omission as due to accident.

2. the court of the LORD'S house: cf. xix. 14.

unto all the cities of Judah. We should probably strike out 'the cities of,' with the LXX; it seems to be a reminiscence of xi. 6. In vii. 2 we have 'Hear the word of Yahweh, all Judah.' The occasion was apparently a festival when the people from the country districts and other towns of Judah came up to Jerusalem and assembled at the Temple. To the people, thus trusting, in spite of their recent disasters, in the Temple as the guarantee of Yahweh's presence and protection, the prophet is sent with his unwelcome message.

keep not back a word. As the sequel showed, the message was one which the prophet could deliver only at the risk of his life. He was therefore exposed to the temptation of modifying or omitting the sterner portions of it. Accordingly in this instance the warning is repeated, which he had received as a general instruction at the outset of his ministry, 'speak unto them all that I command thee' (i. 17). For the expression here (literally as A.V. 'diminish not a word') cf. Deut. iv. 2, xii. 32.

3. turn every man from his evil way. Observe the individualizing form of the expression.

man from his evil way; that I may repent me of the evil,
which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of
4 their doings. And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith
the LORD: If ye will not hearken to me, to walk in
5 my law, which I have set before you, to hearken to the
words of my servants the prophets, whom I send unto
you, even rising up early and sending them, but ye have
6 not hearkened; then will I make this house like Shiloh,

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that I may repent me. Even now repentance and reform may avert the meditated judgement. For the principle cf. xviii. 8, and its most beautiful expression in the Book of Jonah. Ezekiel applies it to the individual (Ezek. xviii. 21–23, 27, 28, xxxiii. 11–20). The anthropomorphic assertion of God's repentance is not uncommon in the Old Testament from Gen. vi. 6 onwards.

4–6. Duhm says that Baruch could not have written a single word of these verses. The reason seems to be that Jeremiah could not have made the deliverance of the people dependent on obedience to the Law, in view of what he says in viii. 8, 9, and Baruch also must have known that the audience, and the priests and prophets in particular, were the most zealous adherents of the Law. It may be granted that at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign Jeremiah would probably not have regarded an adhesion to Deuteronomy as completely satisfying his religious ideal. He had, we may well believe, been disillusioned as to the value of the Reformation. Yet the religious and moral requirements of Deuteronomy as distinguished from the ritual regulations must have still seemed to him largely valid, and if we can trust, as in the present writer's judgement we confidently may, the report of the address in vii, we have there a catalogue of the sins of Judah, which obedience to the Deuteronomic Law would have brought to an end. We may then regard the words as quite genuine, even on the assumption that 'my law' refers to the Book of the Law on which the Reformation was based. But this interpretation may not be necessary. The parallel clause, 'to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets,' probably provides us with the true explanation, so that we should take the word rendered 'law' in the earlier non-technical sense of instruction, as in Isa. i. 10, where 'the word of Yahweh' is parallel to 'the instruction of our God,' and the reference is to the prophetic utterance which follows.

5. rising up early and sending: cf. vii. 13, and elsewhere.

6. like Shiloh: see vii. 12–14.

and will make this city a curse to all the nations of
the earth. And the priests and the prophets and all 7
the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in
the house of the LORD. And it came to pass, when 8

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a curse to all the nations. The meaning is not, of course, that the ruined city will prove a curse to the nations, but that it will furnish them with so telling an example of utter destruction that they will employ it in their imprecations of disaster on their enemies, invoking on them a destruction similar to that which had befallen Jerusalem. This forms a contrast to the promise, 'In thee shall all the families of the earth bless themselves' (Gen. xii. 3: cf. xxii. 18), which means that in their invocations of blessing upon themselves the nations will utter the wish that they may be as blessed as Abraham (cf. iv. 2).

7. Jeremiah had taken up a position in which the whole of those who had gathered for the assembly at the Temple could hear his words. This audience included, in addition to the great body of the people, the official representatives of religion, the priests and prophets, but not the princes (see 10).

8. Jeremiah was heard without interruption to the end. This would be due not so much to the reverence in which the people held him, as to the fact that their dearest prejudices were not violated apparently till the close of the address. Denunciation of sin and threat of punishment were quite in order; Jeremiah was following here the path already taken by his predecessors and himself. To predict the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem was to touch the susceptibilities of the people in the tenderest point: cf. vii. 4. That it was bitterly resented by priests and prophets goes without saying; to them it would seem to be blasphemy, the penalty for which was death: cf. the case of Stephen (Acts vi, vii). The statement that 'all the people' joined the priests and prophets in the arrest of Jeremiah and threat of the death-penalty creates a difficulty. According to 11, the priests and prophets alone lay the charge against him, and the people are coupled with the princes as those before whom the accusation is brought; and similarly in 12–15 Jeremiah treats the people as judges rather than accusers. In 16 they unite with the princes in giving a verdict of acquittal. If the words 'and all the people' belong to the original text, we must suppose that they are not to be literally taken, and that while the multitude or a section of it assailed the prophet, he subsequently won them over to his side. This would harmonize with the well-known fickleness of the crowd, which is peculiarly susceptible to suggestion, and with the fact that in 24 it is said that Ahikam protected Jeremiah so that he was not given 'into the

Jeremiah had made an end of speaking all that the
LORD had commanded him to speak unto all the people,
that the priests and the prophets and all the people
9 laid hold on him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. Why
hast thou prophesied in the name of the LORD, saying,
This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be
desolate, without inhabitant? And all the people were
gathered unto Jeremiah in the house of the LORD.

10 And when the princes of Judah heard these things,
they came up from the king's house unto the house of
the LORD; and they sat in the entry of the new gate of
11 the LORD'S *house*. Then spake the priests and the pro-

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hand of the people to put him to death.' But this was probably at a later period. It would be better to omit 'and all the people' here as a mistaken insertion from the enumeration in the preceding verse.

9. The gravity of Jeremiah's offence did not lie simply in the content of his message, but also in his claim that so blasphemous an utterance was prompted by Divine inspiration. The priests and the prophets infer the origin of the utterance from its character; the princes and people accept Jeremiah's claim to have spoken in Yahweh's name seriously, and judge its character in that light. The statement at the end of the verse confirms the view that 'and all the people' should be deleted in 8. Apparently the priests and prophets seized Jeremiah at the close of his address, and then the people crowded round the prophet and his accusers.

10. the princes of Judah. These were apparently members of the royal house, together it may be with other high officials. They had perhaps been at the king's council, but they came up to the Temple on learning of the tumult. A messenger may have brought the news, or they may have heard the noise themselves, since the palace was close to the Temple, standing, as 'they came up' indicates, on a somewhat lower elevation. When they arrived they sat in the gate to administer justice in the case.

the new gate. The identification is uncertain. It is often identified with that mentioned in xx. 2, and the designation 'new gate' is explained on the assumption that it was 'the upper gate' built by Jotham (2 Kings xv. 35).

11. When the judges had taken their seat the complainants stated their case. The words 'ye have heard with your ears' is phets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy of death; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears. Then spake 12 Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the words that ye have heard. There- 13 fore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.

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applicable only to the people, since the princes were not present at the assembly.

This man is worthy of death. It is not clear whether the Hebrew (cf. Deut. xix. 6) means this man has committed a capital offence, or this man deserves the death sentence. The material difference is inconsiderable: the religious authorities demand the death of the prophet on the same charge of blasphemy on which their successors judged Jesus to be worthy of death and perpetrated the execution of Stephen. But although the question whether Jeremiah's utterance constituted blasphemy was one on which an ecclesiastical court would pronounce a presumably expert decision, the final decision happily did not rest with priests and prophets but with princes and people. In the pre-exilic period the representatives of religion were not entrusted with the mischievous powers which they later acquired.

12–15. In a few noble and simple words Jeremiah makes his defence. In a sentence he reaffirms his claim to have been charged by God with the message he has just delivered. He renews his exhortation to amendment, and promises that judgement will be then averted. Of his own case he speaks neither with heroics nor unmanly entreaty. He recognizes the legal right of the tribunal to execute him, and confronts the prospect without theatrical defiance on the one hand or abject cowardice on the other, but with a serene expression of his willingness to accept the verdict his judges pronounce. Only he would be doing less than his duty were he so proudly to refuse all comment on his own case, that he failed to point out what a crime they would commit in slaying one, whose only fault had been his faithfulness in executing the commission his God and theirs had given him. It is a great scene which here passes before us, in which the prophet's bearing is wholly worthy of himself, and in which we do well to observe his unshaken conviction that his message had been entrusted to him by God Himself.

14 But as for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me
15 as is good and right in your eyes. Only know ye for
certain that, if ye put me to death, ye shall bring innocent
blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the
inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent
16 me unto you to speak all these words in your ears. Then
said the princes and all the people unto the priests and
to the prophets: This man is not worthy of death; for
he hath spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.
17 Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake

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16. The princes and people have a wider outlook and more freedom from narrow prejudice than the official custodians of religion. They are impressed with the calm bearing and simple dignity of the prophet, and with his firm confidence in his Divine commission. They acquit him on the ground that he has spoken to them in the name of Yahweh. Not indeed that the mere claim to have done so would have been held sufficient. But they are swayed by the impression made on them by the man himself, and by the reflection that a prophet who proclaims an unpopular message at the risk of his life gives thereby ample security for his sincerity. Reading the message through the man rather than the man through the distastefulness of the message, they recognize that God is really its author, and that His spokesman must be permitted to say what apart from such a source would have been regarded as blasphemous.

17. The decision to acquit the prophet is now corroborated by an appeal to precedent. The 'elders of the land' may perhaps be an official title, standing for the heads of families throughout Judah. They had a legal status, and constituted an important element in the community and its organization. But the phrase may indicate age rather than status. If so, the meaning is that some of the old people, especially from the country districts ('the land'), related the story of Micah's drastic prediction as it had come down to them in their traditions. Micah was himself a countryman and a man of the people, unlike the aristocratic Isaiah of Jerusalem, and his words were more likely to be cherished among the countryfolk, whose attitude towards a prediction of the capital's downfall would be less bitter than the reception accorded it in the capital itself. There is no good reason for doubting the accuracy of the story told by 'the elders.'

to all the assembly of the people, saying, [a] Micaiah the 18

[a] Another reading is, *Micah.* See Micah i. 1.

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18. Micaiah. The form Micah read by the Q^e^re is that familiar to us in the Book of Micah itself, but it is an abbreviated form. Even Micaiah is abbreviated from the older Micayahu. Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah, and a native of Moresheth-gath, which is said to have been near Eleutheropolis, and should probably be distinguished from Mareshah. His prophecy was uttered about a hundred years earlier. It is reported here and in Mic. iii. 12 with almost complete verbal agreement. It was as uncompromising as the denunciation for which Jeremiah had just been charged with a capital crime. It is only fair to recognize, however, that the situation had altered. In the interval Isaiah's doctrine of the inviolability of Zion had been vindicated by Sennacherib's overthrow and had hardened into a dogma; while the centralization of the worship had left the Temple as the sole seat of the cultus of Yahweh. The offence caused by Jeremiah was therefore greater than that caused by Micah. For in the reign of Hezekiah Jerusalem had no ecclesiastical monopoly, and it might have been destroyed without the cult of Yahweh coming to an end. But now the Temple was the only legitimate seat of the cultus, so that its destruction seemed to carry with it far more serious consequences than formerly.

The reference to Micah is one of great interest, in view of the almost complete absence of similar allusions in the prophetic literature. Jeremiah does not himself name any of the eighth-century prophets, deeply though he had been influenced by them, and especially by Hosea. Ezekiel and Jeremiah do not mention each other, though Ezekiel was much influenced by his senior contemporary and shared his pessimistic estimate of Judah's character and imminent ruin, while Jeremiah was actually in correspondence with the exiles among whom Ezekiel a few years later began to labour. Here the reference is made by the people, and its preservation is due to Baruch.

The quotation here has an important bearing on the problem raised by the prophecy in Mic. iv. 1–3, which is found also in Isa. ii. 2–4. The passage in Micah follows immediately on Mic. iii. 12 which is here quoted. If this was its original situation, it follows that the passage was uttered by Micah in the reign of Hezekiah, assuming the chronological trustworthiness of the statement in this verse. Various explanations are given of the inclusion in both Isaiah and Micah of this prophecy. Some think it was independently derived from an older prophet, some that it was original with one of these and borrowed by the other or inserted by an editor, others regard it as a post-exilic oracle inserted in

Morashtite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah; and he spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: [a] Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest.
19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and intreat the

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[a] See Micah iii. 12.

both books. The commentaries on Isaiah and Micah must be consulted for a discussion of this question (the present writer inclines to the view that the oracle is post-exilic); here it is necessary simply to draw attention to the bearing on it of the present passage. If we could assume that Mic. iv. 1–3 was originally attached to Mic. iii. 12, we should then be able to affirm that the passage was certainly no later than Hezekiah's reign. It is, however, most unlikely that this was the case. Our present narrative shows clearly that Micah's prediction was one of unrelieved disaster, which was not fulfilled simply on account of the king's repentance and prayers.

the mountain of the house: i. e. the summit on which the Temple was built.

the high places of a forest. The LXX reads the singular, which should probably be adopted, especially since the singular as written at this time would be indistinguishable from the plural. The term 'high place of a forest' may simply mean 'a wooded height,' i.e. the Temple will be destroyed and its site covered with trees. But possibly it may be used in the technical sense of 'sanctuary,' and in that case the meaning will be that in place of the splendid building which is now the exclusive sanctuary of Yahweh, thronged from all parts of Judah, there will be simply a forest sanctuary, some rude structure to which only the few dwellers in the sparsely populated district would resort. Rothstein thinks that the LXX rendering 'grove' presupposes a different Hebrew text, and reads 'the thicket (*lisbakh*) of a forest' or 'the thickets of a forest,' as in Isa. ix. 17.

19. This result of Micah's preaching is otherwise unknown to us, but there is no reason to doubt its historicity. It accords with the principle expressed in xviii. 7, 8 (see the note) that timely repentance may avert a threatened judgement. Notice the conjunction of Judah with the king in the infliction or withholding of the death penalty. We should probably continue with plurals (so LXX, Syr., Vulg.), 'did not they fear,' &c.

intreat the favour. The Hebrew means literally 'smooth the favour of the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus should we commit great evil against our own souls. And there 20 was also a man that prophesied in the name of the LORD,

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face,' i.e. mollify. This very anthropomorphic expression was probably a technical term in the sacrificial vocabulary, meaning to soothe the deity by an offering, and thus remove the frown which wrinkled his face. Presumably it was far more ancient than the Hebrew people, but it is remarkable that in the prophetic literature it appears very late, being found elsewhere only in Zech. vii. 2, viii. 21, 22, Mal. i. 9.

Thus should we commit: i.e. if we put Jeremiah to death. The Hebrew is more vivid, 'But we are committing.' It was an evil to shed innocent blood, a graver evil when it was the blood of Yahweh's messenger. But their guilt would be aggravated, since they had the precedent of Micah before them. The penitence of king and people had received the stamp of the Divine approval, manifested in the remission of penalty. If Jeremiah is murdered they will only be sealing their own death-warrant. The narrative is not formally concluded, but we are intended to understand that Jeremiah leaves the scene unhurt, though if glances could kill he would doubtless have fallen a victim to the envenomed hatred of his baffled adversaries.

souls: better **lives.**

20–23. See vol. i, p. 17. This episode is related to show how grave was the risk which Jeremiah ran. The source of the narrative is uncertain, but in all probability we owe it to Baruch. Cornill suggested in his edition of the Hebrew text that the passage should be placed after 24. It is true that it joins on awkwardly to 19; the reader would at first suppose that the elders of the land were still speaking, but soon sees that this is out of the question. But 24 also would connect badly with 16–19. Jeremiah is saved from imminent death by the verdict of the princes and people, endorsed by 'the elders of the land' with their appeal to ancient precedent. The reference to Ahikam as his supporter, who stood between him and death, cannot accordingly refer to this scene. It follows 20-23 quite well; the point of its insertion is that, while Uriah fell a victim to the pertinacious enmity of the king, Jeremiah escaped. We know nothing further of Uriah than we learn from this passage. Apparently he went beyond Jeremiah and attacked Jehoiakim, presumably somewhat later, since Jeremiah's utterance at this time which Uriah repeated was more drastic than anything he had said before.

Uriah the son of Shemaiah of Kiriath-jearim; and he
prophesied against this city and against this land accord-
21 ing to all the words of Jeremiah: and when Jehoiakim
the king, with all his mighty men, and all the princes,
heard his words, the king sought to put him to death;
but when Uriah heard it, he was afraid, and fled, and
22 went into Egypt: and Jehoiakim the king sent men into

Kiriath-jearim. The site of this city is not certain; Robinson's identification with Qaryet el-'Enab (or, as it is now more commonly called, Abū Ghōsh), which is a few miles north-west of Jerusalem on the road to Jaffa, is that most commonly adopted. Some prefer Khirbet 'Erma, near Bēt 'Atāb. The place is chiefly famous as for twenty years the home of the ark (1 Sam. vii. 2).

21. with all his mighty men: omitted in the LXX, perhaps correctly, as the expression is not employed elsewhere in the book.

he was afraid . . . Egypt: cf. Exod. ii. 14, 15, 1 Kings xi. 40. But while Moses was safe from Pharaoh in Midian, and Jeroboam from Solomon in Egypt, Uriah could not escape from Jehoiakim, the vassal of Egypt. The king sent to his suzerain to request the extradition of the prophet.

22. Elnathan . . . Egypt. The LXX omits these words, and in the judgement of several scholars, including Orelli, correctly. In xxxvi. 12 he is mentioned as one of the princes, who heard Baruch read the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies. He was also (xxxvi. 25) one of the three who entreated the king not to burn the roll. It is urged that a man who took this stand would not be likely to have played the part here assigned to him. Moreover the present text, with its repetition of 'into Egypt,' is undeniably awkward. It is not easy, however, just in view of the former difficulty, to understand how any scribe should have selected Elnathan for such a mission. Probably the disputed words are authentic, in which case we might with advantage omit 'men into Egypt,' which has apparently arisen by incorrect repetition of the same words from the latter part of the verse. The LXX was presumably made from the present Hebrew text after this expansion by dittography had taken place; the omission of 22^b was then either accidental, the scribe writing as far as 'Egypt' in 22^a, and his eye passing to the same word at the end of the verse, or deliberate and occasioned partly by the awkwardness of the text, partly by the same consideration, which has weighed with modern scholars, that Elnathan, who had pleaded for the preservation of the roll, was hardly the man to have fetched Uriah from Egypt. But we must not overrate the significance of either action. In the

Egypt, *namely*, Elnathan the son of Achbor, and certain
men with him, into Egypt: and they fetched forth Uriah 23
out of Egypt, and brought him unto Jehoiakim the king;
who slew him with the sword, and cast his dead body into
the graves of the [a] common people. But the hand of 24

[a] Heb. *sons of the people.*

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latter he was simply the king's agent, who must do his master's bidding; and if Uriah had attacked the king, Elnathan may well have justified his action to himself as bringing to his merited fate a man guilty of high treason. Nor does the entreaty that the roll should not be burnt imply any definite adhesion to the prophetic party. Superstition might have prompted it just as well as enlightened religion. Even pirates dread the bad luck which the mutilation of a Bible might bring with it. If he is to be identified with the Elnathan mentioned in 2 Kings xxiv. 8, he was the father of Nehushta, one of Jehoiakim's wives and the mother of Jehoiachin. As the king's father-in-law he would be well suited for a diplomatic mission to Egypt.

Achbor. According to 2 Kings xxii. 12, 14 he formed part of the deputation sent by Josiah to Huldah to learn Yahweh's will with reference to the Book of the Law. The name means 'mouse'; it is noteworthy that animal names seem to have become prominent about this period, Shaphan (24) meaning 'rock-badger.' See Gray, *Hebrew Proper Names*, pp. 98, 103, 113-5.

23. Extradition was apparently a well-recognized feature of international politics. Jehoiakim's application would be all the more favoured that he had been appointed by Egypt, and any attack on him would be regarded as inimical to her interests in Judah.

the graves of the common people. This is unquestionably the correct text; the LXX reads 'of his people.' But it is intrinsically improbable that the prophet should be buried in his family grave, and the LXX testifies against its own reading by retaining 'cast.' The king's vengeance pursued his victim after he was dead. He did not indeed give him 'the burial of an ass' which was later predicted for himself (xxii. 19), but he deprived him of the burial with his fathers which was so much prized by every Hebrew (see *Enc. Bib.* 5138, and note on xxii. 18, 19). Those who were too poor to possess a family grave had to be buried in the common burial-ground, since it would, at any rate in earlier times, have seemed a desecration to admit strangers into the family tomb. Where the public burial-ground was situated we do not know, but from 2 Kings xxiii. 6 we may infer that it was near 'the brook Kidron.'

24. While this was the fate of Uriah, Jeremiah was preserved, Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death.

27 [BS] In the beginning of the reign of [a] Jehoiakim the

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[a] Properly, *Zedekiah*, as in some ancient authorities. See vv. 3, 12, 20, ch. xxviii. 1.

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perhaps at the same time, by the powerful influence of Ahikam. Like Achbor, Ahikam had been a member of the deputation to Huldah after the discovery of the Book of the Law, if we can assume his identity with the Ahikam mentioned in 2 Kings xxii. 14. He was the father of Gedaliah, who worthily continued the family tradition. It is questionable whether Shaphan is to be identified with Shaphan the scribe, who was another member of the deputation, since we should naturally expect the name of the father to precede that of the son in the list of those who formed it (2 Kings xxii. 14). In view of the fact that the people had protected Jeremiah the latter part of the verse is surprising. But the mob is proverbially fickle, and the prophet's enemies would no doubt seek to retrieve their defeat by playing on its prejudices.

xxvii–xxix. JEREMIAH CONTRADICTS THE PREDICTIONS OF A SPEEDY RETURN FROM EXILE.

These chapters are closely connected not only by community of subject-matter in that all three are directed against the optimists who hoped to reverse the disaster of 597 B. C., but in that they unite in exhibiting certain peculiarities which suggest that at one time they circulated independently. They show a preference for the shortened termination in -yah, instead of -yahū, of names compounded with the Divine Name. The longer forms also occur, and in some cases both types appear side by side in the same verse. Nevertheless the proportion of the shorter to the longer form is characteristic, and it is noteworthy that the prophet's own name appears several times in these chapters in the shortened form, but nowhere else in the book. It is also striking that whereas in the rest of the book the designation 'the prophet' is appended to Jeremiah in little more than a sixth of its total occurrences, here it is used fairly frequently, i. e. in xxviii, xxix. It ought to be said, however, that this is not so significant as it seems, since Jeremiah is here definitely represented as in conflict with the prophets, so that the addition of the designation has a special appropriateness, particularly in xxviii, where he and the prophet Hananiah, who also is constantly so described, confront son of Josiah, king of Judah, came this word unto Jeremiah

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each other. Even so it must be acknowledged that it is a peculiarity of this section. Further, whereas elsewhere in Jeremiah except xxxiv. 1, xxxix. 5, which is derived from 2 Kings, the more accurate form Nebuchadrezzar is always found, in this section the later form Nebuchadnezzar is employed eight times, the more correct form only once (xxix. 21). Lastly, the LXX diverges from the Hebrew in these chapters to a quite exceptional degree. Graf, in his careful discussion, has reduced the significance of these phenomena by reference to parallels, but the combination of peculiarities is too great to be explained by the carelessness of copyists. We should have to explain why this cause did not operate on a similar scale elsewhere. Giesebrecht suggests that these chapters may have been copied out for circulation among the exiles in Babylon, and having thus an independent existence were affected by causes which did not affect the rest of the book. Duhm, while admitting not a little of the chapters to be derived from the memoirs of Baruch, yet considers that they were inserted in the book much later than the greater part of xxxii–xlv.

The position of these chapters after xxvi may be due to the fact that here also Jeremiah's gloomy predictions of ruin are vehemently opposed by the prophets.

xxvii, xxviii. JEREMIAH CONTRADICTS THE OPTIMISM OF THE PROPHETS IN JUDAH.

These chapters are linked together by the account they give of Jeremiah's attack on the optimistic forecast of the prophets in Judah that the Babylonian dominion would soon be ended and the Temple vessels be restored. In xxvii the prophets are referred to collectively, while in xxviii we read of Jeremiah's encounter with an individual representative of the order. Yet there are noteworthy points of difference: xxvii is written in a much more diffuse style than xxviii, though the former exists in the LXX in a much more abbreviated form; xxvii is written in the first person, xxviii almost entirely in the third; xxvii is introduced by a very general indication of time which contains the palpable blunder of Jehoiakim for Zedekiah, whereas an exact date stands at the head of xxviii. Moreover xxviii. 1 by the words 'it came to pass the same year' implies that a year has been mentioned in xxvii, but that is not true of the present text. It is probable that the two chapters in their original form constituted a single connected narrative from the pen of Baruch, in which Jeremiah was referred to in the third person. The statement in xxviii. 1 that the incidents recorded in xxviii belonged to the same year as those recorded in xxvii is not only obviously correct but compels us to insert the year at the beginning of xxvii. Since xxvii. 1 is absent

2 from the LORD, saying, Thus saith the LORD to me:

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in the LXX and does not correspond to what xxviii. 1 entitles us to expect, we should eliminate it as a mere repetition of xxvi. 1; and substitute for it, with Cornill who is followed by Duhm, the greater part of xxviii. 1^a, reading 'And it came to pass in the fourth year of Zedekiah, king of Judah, in the fifth month, that this word came unto Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying.' Chap. xxvii has also experienced a good deal of expansion, which we can trace partially by the aid of the LXX. It may be added that Rothstein reconstructs the original order substantially as follows: xxviii. 1–9, xxvii. 2–4, 12^b, 8–11, xxviii. 10–17, xxvii. 16–22, though it must be borne in mind that these portions have to be taken as Baruch's work only when the additions of later redactors have been removed. This rearrangement is certainly ingenious, but it involves excessive transposition, and it is doubtful whether, apart from this, it presents a more probable view as to the order of the incidents.

In spite of Schmidt's verdict that the story of the bands and yokes is 'scarcely historical' (*Enc. Bib.* 2387), there seems to be no solid ground for doubting the general accuracy of the narrative. That in the fourth year of Zedekiah (594–593 B. C.) a movement to throw off the Babylonian yoke was on foot among the states of Palestine enumerated in xxvii. 3 is exposed to no suspicion in itself, and it is confirmed by the fact (if we can regard it as such) that Zedekiah went to Babylon in the same year (li. 59). He may have gone voluntarily to clear himself of the suspicion that he had meditated rebellion, or he may have been summoned there by Nebuchadnezzar. The coincidence can hardly be accidental. Further, Cornill raises the question whether the fact that Pharaoh Necoh died in 594 may have occasioned the movement in Palestine, since it may have been thought that his successor Psammetichus II would adopt a different policy from his father, who was bound by his agreement with Nebuchadnezzar. In any case Psammetichus was prevented by his war with Ethiopia from attacking Babylon, and by this cardinal fact of the situation Cornill explains the failure of the coalition to effect anything. Nothing could be attempted without the promise of support from Egypt, and, as that was not forthcoming, the Palestinian movement against Babylon came to nothing. We have no substantial grounds for assuming that Zedekiah was in any way committed to the coalition, though he was obviously in danger of yielding to the pressure from within and without. How far Jeremiah's influence co-operated with the conditions of the period to bring about the failure of the plot we are not in a position to say, nor whether the fulfilment of his prediction of Hananiah's death did much to persuade the leaders in Judah that he saw more clearly than they

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Make thee bands and [a] bars, and put them upon thy

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[a] See Lev. xxvi. 13.

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did what the issue of rebellion would be. It is a gratifying sign of a return to a less prejudiced attitude towards the predictive element in prophecy that scholars so free from traditional bias as Giesebrecht, Duhm, and Cornill, should affirm their full belief in the statement of xxviii. 17 that Jeremiah's prediction of Hananiah's death within the year was fulfilled.

xxvii. 1–11. Yahweh bade me make bands and bars, and send word to the five kings by the messengers they had sent to Zedekiah, that Yahweh the Mighty Creator had given all these lands into Nebuchadnezzar's hand, and all nations should serve him and his successors, till the time of retribution on his dynasty should come. The nation that refused to submit to him should be consumed. Let them not listen to the lying predictions of freedom, which can end only in exile and death. The nation that will serve the king of Babylon shall be left undisturbed in its own land.

12–15. I warned Zedekiah also to submit, so as to live and not die, and refuse to listen to the prophets who say in Yahweh's name that they should serve the king of Babylon. They prophesy falsely, and ruin will be the portion of those who obey their behests.

16–22. I warned the priests and people not to believe the prophets who foretold that the Temple vessels would soon be restored, but to serve the king of Babylon and save themselves and the city. I challenged them if they were really Yahweh's prophets to pray that the vessels which were still left should not be taken to Babylon. For Yahweh has said that those which Nebuchadnezzar had not taken when Jeconiah was carried into captivity should be taken to Babylon and remain there till He restored them.

xxviii. 1–11. Hananiah the prophet announced to Jeremiah at the Temple, before the priests and all the people, that Yahweh had declared that He had broken the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar, and that within two years He would bring the Temple vessels, with Jeconiah and all the exiles. Jeremiah replied that he wished it might be so, but that the older prophets had prophesied of disaster, and the prophet of peace could be recognized as truly Yahweh's messenger only when his word had been accomplished. Then Hananiah broke the bar from Jeremiah's neck, and said that thus Yahweh would within two years break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar from the neck of all the nations. Then Jeremiah went his way.

12–17. Then Yahweh bade Jeremiah tell Hananiah that bars of iron should replace the wooden bars he had broken. For He had put an iron yoke on the neck of the nations, and they should serve Nebuchadnezzar. Then Jeremiah told Hananiah that Yahweh

3 neck; and send them to the king of Edom, and to the
king of Moab, and to the king of the children of Ammon,
and to the king of Tyre, and to the king of Zidon, by the
hand of the messengers which come to Jerusalem unto
4 Zedekiah king of Judah; and give them a charge unto

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had not sent him, but he had made the people to trust in a lie, and should in consequence die that year. So Hananiah died in the seventh month.

xxvii. 1. It has long been recognized that the reference to Jehoiakim is mistaken, and that the events recorded really happened in the reign of Zedekiah, as is clear from the statements of this chapter (3, 12, 20) and the chronological note at the beginning of xxviii. But the mere substitution of Zedekiah for Jehoiakim does not yield a satisfactory text. The beginning of Zedekiah's reign, when he had just sworn fealty to Babylon, was certainly no occasion for projects of revolt; moreover xxviii. 1 requires a definite date, viz. the fourth year of Zedekiah, to have been mentioned here. Hence we cannot follow the LXX and simply strike out the verse. For a probable restoration of the original text see the Introduction to xxvii, xxviii (p. 40).

2. to me: is omitted by the LXX. We should either omit it, or read 'to Jeremiah,' the last letter being an abbreviation for 'Jeremiah.'

bands and bars: i.e. a yoke, the wooden bars being fastened together by thongs. Such symbolic actions were not uncommon among the prophets; a close parallel is to be found in 1 Kings xxii. 11, where Zedekiah the courtier-prophet, who opposed Micaiah, as Hananiah opposed Jeremiah, 'made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the Lord, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until they be consumed.'

3. and send them. Only one yoke is mentioned in 2, and this is put on the prophet's own neck. This verse suggests to the reader that five yokes were made and sent to the five kings. But since 'them' in 3 is identical with 'them' in 2, the reference must be to the bands and bars of the yoke worn by Jeremiah, and these were obviously not sent, since Jeremiah was wearing the yoke at a later time (xxviii. 10). The text is accordingly corrupt, and we should omit 'them,' with Lucian's edition of the LXX, reading simply 'and send to the king,' i.e. send a message. The message was enforced by the symbolism of the yoke which typified subjection to Babylon, but no yoke was sent. The countries here named occur in the same order in xxv. 21, 22. The messengers had no doubt been sent to Jerusalem to plot rebellion against Babylon.

their masters, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the
God of Israel: Thus shall ye say unto your masters; I 5
have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon
the face of the earth, by my great power and by my outstretched
arm; and I give it unto whom it seemeth right
unto me. And now have I given all these lands into the 6
hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant;
and the beasts of the field also have I given him to serve
him. [S] And all the nations shall serve him, and his son, 7
and his son's son, until the time of his own land come:
and then many nations and great kings shall serve them-

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5. Yahweh the God of Israel is proclaimed to these heathen monarchs as the Creator of the universe, whose right to dispose of it as He will rests upon the fact that He has made it. The LXX omits 'the man . . . the earth,' probably because by an oversight the translator passed from the first to the second mention of the earth.

my outstretched arm. The expression is more generally (and more appropriately) used with reference to God's great acts of deliverance (e.g. Exod. vi. 6, Deut. iv. 34) or chastisement (xxi. 5, and the refrain in Isa. ix. 8—x. 4, v. 25–30). It is used as here with reference to creation in the probably post-exilic passage xxxii. 17.

6. my servant. See xxv. 9.

the beasts of the field. This is at first sight a rather strange addition. The dominion of man is defined in Gen. i. 26–28, on which Ps. viii. 6–8 rests. It is a rule over all the lower creation in earth, air, and sea. It belongs to mankind as such, and so preeminently to the lord of mankind, or at least of 'all these lands.' It would be rather precarious to affirm that this clause is of Jeremianic origin: cf. xxviii. 14, Dan. ii. 38.

7. This verse is omitted in the LXX; it has been regarded as a later addition by Movers, Hitzig, and Kuenen, and most recent commentators. It is unfitting that in a warning to submit to Babylon such a reference to Babylon's fall should be included. The passage rests apparently on xxv. 12, 14, and the enumeration of the kings as three seems to be due to a combination of the reference to Evil-Merodach (lii. 31 = 2 Kings xxv. 27) with the narrative of Belshazzar's overthrow. It had the advantage of substituting a vaguer definition of the period than the inexact seventy years which is found in the parallel passages.

serve themselves of him. See notes on xxv. 11, 14.

8 selves of him. [BS] And it shall come to pass, that the
nation and the kingdom which will not serve the same
Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and that will not put
their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that
nation will I punish, saith the LORD, with the sword, and
with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have
9 consumed them by his hand. But as for you, hearken ye
not to your prophets, nor to your diviners, nor to your
dreams, nor to your soothsayers, nor to your sorcerers,
which speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of
10 Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you, to remove you
far from your land; and that I should drive you out and ye
11 should perish. But the nation that shall bring their neck
under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him,
that *nation* will I let remain in their own land, saith the
LORD; and they shall till it, and dwell therein.

12 And I spake to Zedekiah king of Judah according to

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8 continues 6, or perhaps better 6^a.

will not serve . . . and that: to be omitted, with the LXX.

consumed them by. The Hebrew is very questionable: we should probably read 'given them into,' changing one letter.

9. The five kings are warned not to trust their own optimistic fore-tellers of the future. Five classes are enumerated (for 'dreams' we should probably read 'dreamers' with several versions), but whether the writer intended us to discriminate sharply between them is uncertain. We may have merely a rhetorical accumulation of terms, as if he would say, Try all types of those who profess to foretell the future; they will all prophesy smooth things, for the heathen have only false prophets, but do not believe them or you will be ruined. Cf. the false prophets confronted by Micaiah, 1 Kings xxii. 5–28.

10. to remove you. Certainly it was not the intention of these prophets to secure the exile of their nation, in which they would be involved, with all the additional odium attached to discredited advisers, but if they had deliberately contemplated such an issue they could not have given advice more calculated to reach it.

and that . . . perish. This clause is absent in the LXX, and has probably been introduced from 15.

12. I spake. The first person is surprising both here and in 16,

all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke
of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and
live. Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, 13
by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD hath
spoken concerning the nation that will not serve the king
of Babylon? And hearken not unto the words of the 14
prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve
the king of Babylon: for they prophesy a lie unto you.
For I have not sent them, saith the LORD, but they 15
prophesy falsely in my name; that I might drive you
out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that
prophesy unto you. Also I spake to the priests and to 16

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since in the preceding verses Yahweh is the speaker and Jeremiah the recipient of the message. Possibly the meaning may be that Jeremiah's message to the kings still continues to the effect that he had given the same counsel to Zedekiah, the priests and the people, as he is giving to them (so Stade). But such awkwardness of expression would stamp the passage as secondary. It would be simpler to read here and in 16 'said Jeremiah,' with Giesebrecht (see note on 2), or 'And thou shalt speak.'

Bring your necks. The counsel is formally addressed to the king only, but his action involves that of many more, hence the plural. After these words the LXX omits the rest of this verse, the whole of 13, and 14^{a} (as far as 'saying'). Duhm prefers this, and carries this preference to the logical conclusion of striking out the last clause of 14 and the whole of 15. But it is more probable that the Hebrew is correct, since the bare phrase 'bring your necks' is an otherwise unexampled expression. The Greek rendering is due to an oversight of the translator or a scribe, whose eye passed from 'serve' in 12 to 'serve' in 14. He also omitted 'under the yoke of the king of Babylon,' because through this oversight the king of Babylon was mentioned in two consecutive clauses.

16–22. In these verses there is an astonishing divergence between the Hebrew and the Septuagint, the latter containing about a quarter only of the former. Verse 17 is omitted, similarly 18^{b}, while for 19–22 the LXX reads simply: 'For thus saith the LORD, And as for the residue of the vessels which the king of Babylon took not, when he carried away Jeconiah from Jerusalem, they shall be carried to Babylon, saith the LORD.' The main difference between the two texts is that the LXX simply predicts that the vessels still all this people, saying, Thus saith the LORD: Hearken

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left in Jerusalem will be taken to Babylon, while the Hebrew adds the prediction that eventually they will be brought back again. A good many scholars prefer the LXX. And it is undeniable that stylistically it is much superior, and that we may well suspect that the hand of a diffuse supplementer has here, as so often elsewhere, expanded the original text. Verse 17 interrupts the connexion between 16 and 18, which refer to the Temple vessels, with an inappropriate reiteration of the theme of the earlier part of the chapter. It should probably be omitted. Verse 18^{b} ('that the vessels . . . to Babylon') is not indispensable, but its omission makes the sentence abrupt and ambiguous, since the content of the intercession might either be that the vessels should be brought back or that the vessels which remained should not be taken away. Accordingly the Hebrew is here to be preferred; the eye of the scribe or translator apparently passed from *bi* to *ki* (19). The enumeration of the vessels that were left behind would have been unnecessary for Jeremiah's contemporaries, and may have been added from 2 Kings xxv. 13 ff. The omission in the LXX of any prediction that the vessels would be brought back might be due to the fact that those specially enumerated in 19 were not restored, since the Babylonians had broken them up for convenience of transport (2 Kings xxv. 13). But in favour of the LXX it may be urged that this prediction of restoration is hardly likely to have been made in the same breath as the threat that the vessels would be carried away, whereas the supplementers loved such modifications; the expression 'the day that I visit them' is very strange when applied to inanimate objects; and the insertion of the clause may be due to the account of the restoration of the vessels given in Ezra i. 7-11. In this passage the vessels restored are simply defined as those 'which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem.' Apparently this covers both those taken away when Jehoiachin was deported to Babylon, and those taken when the city was destroyed. It seems best then to regard the prediction of restoration as a later insertion in the Hebrew text. It may be added that Giesebrecht considers the LXX text to have arisen largely through abbreviation of the Hebrew, but he rejects 17 and the prediction of restoration in 22 ('and there . . . this place'), with the latter part of 21 ('concerning . . . Jerusalem').

16. the priests. A warning addressed to the ecclesiastics was in Jeremiah's time always in place, since they counted for so much in the politics of the day, supporting with all the weight of their religious influence the struggle for freedom from Babylon advocated by the prophets. But it was specially appropriate that the warning not to expect the Temple vessels to be restored, but rather to anticipate

not to the words of your prophets that prophesy unto
you, saying, Behold, the vessels of the LORD's house
shall now shortly be brought again from Babylon: for
they prophesy a lie unto you. Hearken not unto them; 17
serve the king of Babylon, and live: wherefore should
this city become a desolation? But if they be pro- 18
phets, and if the word of the LORD be with them, let
them now make intercession to the LORD of hosts,
that the vessels which are left in the house of the
LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah, and at
Jerusalem, go not to Babylon. For thus saith the LORD 19
of hosts concerning the pillars, and concerning the sea,
and concerning the bases, and concerning the residue of
the vessels that are left in this city, which Nebuchad- 20
nezzar king of Babylon took not, when he carried away
captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah,
from Jerusalem to Babylon, and all the nobles of Judah
and Jerusalem; yea, thus saith the LORD of hosts, the 21
God of Israel, concerning the vessels that are left in the
house of the LORD, and in the house of the king of Judah,
and at Jerusalem: They shall be carried to Babylon, and 22
there shall they be, until the day that I visit them, saith

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that all the vessels which remained would follow them to Babylon, should be addressed to the custodians of the Temple in whose charge they were.

now shortly. The LXX omits, whether rightly it is difficult to say, but the words give the correct sense, as we see from xxviii. 3, 'within two full years.'

19. Cf. lii. 17. See Dr. Skinner's notes on 1 Kings vii. 15–39, 2 Kings xxv. 13–17.

20. nobles. The word is of Aramaic origin. It occurs in 1 Kings xxi. 8, 11; if it is not a gloss in this passage, as some think, its use is probably due to the origination of the narrative in the Northern Kingdom. Otherwise it is a late word, being found especially in Nehemiah. In the present passage it is perhaps a sign of late date; if so, this clause is a latter addition. It is found also in xxxix. 6.

the LORD; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

28 [B] And it came to pass the same year, in the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fourth year, in the fifth month, that Hananiah the son of Azzur the prophet, which was of Gibeon, spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and of

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xxviii. 1. If the view expressed in the introduction to xxvii, xxviii is correct, the former part of this verse should be transferred to the beginning of xxvii (except of course 'in the same year' and the reference to the beginning of the reign), see pp. 39, 40. We should probably connect this chapter closely with xxvii, reading simply 'Then Hananiah . . . spake saying.'

Hananiah. Nothing further is known of him than is recorded here. On the estimate we should form of him and the 'false prophets' in general see Robertson Smith's article 'Prophet,' *Enc. Brit.* 9th ed., vol. xix, p. 817, with Cheyne's contribution to the article 'Prophetic Literature' (*Enc. Bib.* 3875-8), which quotes the most important points in Robertson Smith's article, and A. B. Davidson's *Old Testament Prophecy*, pp. 285-308. There is no reason to doubt Hananiah's sincerity; he probably believed in his own inspiration, and was fanatically convinced that his forecast would be verified. But he and his class lived on traditional religion with its blending of old and new, the semi-heathenism of ancient Israel with the prophecy of the eighth century (especially Isaiah's doctrine of the indestructibility of Jerusalem) and the ideals of the reformers; they went on repeating formulae once valid, now obsolete; they lacked the ethical note of the higher prophecy, while they laid emphasis on a full and correct ritual; hence they ignored the moral defects of the people, while they ardently desired that ceremonial defects should be repaired by the restoration of the Temple vessels.

Gibeon: probably to be identified with *el-Jib*, a mile to the north of *Neby Samwil*, where Mizpah of Benjamin stood (see xli. 10-15), and five miles north-west of Jerusalem. It was famous in Hebrew history as the home of the Gibeonites who tricked Joshua into an alliance, and the defeat of the Canaanite confederacy formed against them in consequence (Joshua ix. 3—x. 15); for the ghastly contest between the twelve warriors of Joab and the twelve warriors of Abner (2 Sam. ii. 12-17); for Joab's treacherous murder of Amasa (2 Sam. xx. 8-12); for the choice of Solomon (1 Kings iii. 4-15).

unto me: should probably be deleted, since the narrative speaks of Jeremiah in the third person.

all the people, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the 2
God of Israel, saying, I have broken the yoke of the king
of Babylon. Within two full years will I bring again into 3
this place all the vessels of the LORD's house, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place,
and carried them to Babylon: and I will bring again to 4
this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah,

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2. I have broken the yoke. The choice of the figure was presumably suggested by the presence of Jeremiah wearing his yoke, symbolic of the Babylonian suzerainty. Hananiah introduces his prediction with the prophetic formula claiming Divine origin for it.

3. We do not know how Hananiah was led to fix on two years as the period within which the restoration would be accomplished. It is the temptation of prophets to enhance their credit by venturing on a definiteness in prediction, which the event may or may not justify. Ambiguity is safer, since it provides ways of escape, as the givers of oracles in Greece were well aware. With prophets like Hananiah and Zedekiah, the opponent of Micaiah (1 Kings xxii. 11, 24), the wish was too much the father of the thought: the sincere but lower type of patriotism which dominated them, together with the religious conviction that Yahweh was on their side, blinded them to the real facts; their enthusiasm led them to discount the odds against them. At the same time Hananiah was upheld in his belief by the sympathy of his fellow prophets and the people generally, also by the confidence felt in the neighbouring nations that revolt, at least if supported by Egypt, would be successful. He probably believed what he said, he was apparently in the prophetic ecstasy at the time, and mistook the thoughts which surged up in this self-induced state for Divine revelations.

all: omitted by the LXX. It could easily fall out or be inserted, since the next two consonants are identical with it. It is omitted in 4, but is there followed by similar not identical consonants. It should probably be retained. Observe that the vessels of the Temple take precedence even of the king.

that Nebuchadnezzar . . . to Babylon: omitted by the LXX.

4. The LXX reads simply 'and Jeconiah with the captives of Judah, for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.' The additions in the Hebrew are superfluous, they need not on that account be secondary.

Jeconiah. That while Zedekiah was on the throne Hananiah should have ventured to predict in so many words the restoration

with all the captives of Judah, that went to Babylon, saith the LORD: for I will break the yoke of the king of Baby-
5 lon. Then the prophet Jeremiah said unto the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests, and in the presence of all the people that stood in the house of the
6 LORD, even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD's house, and all them of the captivity, from Babylon unto
7 this place. Nevertheless hear thou now this word that

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of Jehoiachin, describing him moreover, if the Hebrew text is sound, as the king of Judah, is remarkable. Naturally the exiles regarded him as still the legitimate king, and probably many of those left behind agreed with them, but Zedekiah would scarcely relish the prospect of deposition, nor, we may imagine, would the upstarts who had supplanted the earlier administrators. Jeremiah in his reply (6) makes no specific reference to Jehoiachin.

5. The characteristic insertion of 'the prophet' before the personal name, which occurs three times in 5, 6, is omitted in each case in the LXX, and similarly in the rest of the chapter and in xxix.

6. As a patriot, Jeremiah could wish that the wound of his country might be healed. His language is not sarcastic; for the sake of the exiles themselves, for the better administration of the State, he would be glad of their return. But he is not led astray by his preferences, and while the desire that it might be so is sincere, he is assured that it will not be so. It is to be noticed that he does not meet Hananiah's 'Thus saith Yahweh' by a counter-oracle at this point (he does so in 13), but after an expression of sympathy with the desire itself, by an argument from history.

7. His own conviction makes no impression on his antagonists, his prophetic certainty is incommunicable. He must therefore appeal to experience, and does so in the notable utterance of 7-9, which shows how truly Jeremiah interpreted the significance of the great prophets in whose succession he knew himself to stand. They had been prophets of woe, as Jeremiah himself; only when history had confirmed the prediction of a prophet who spoke of peace, could his claim that God had sent him be admitted. So the future would decide whether Hananiah was right; but let him and the people ponder well the significance of the precedent. The passage is very important for its testimony to the predominantly

I speak in thine ears, and in the ears of all the people:
The prophets that have been before me and before thee 8
of old prophesied against many countries, and against
great kingdoms, of war, and of evil, and of pestilence.
The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word 9
of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet
be known, [a] that the LORD hath truly sent him. Then 10
Hananiah the prophet took the bar from off the prophet
Jeremiah's neck, and brake it. And Hananiah spake in 11

[a] †Or, *whom the* LORD *hath truly sent*

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pessimistic character of pre-exilic prophecy in its great representatives. It must receive its due weight in the consideration of the much debated question touching the extent to which prophecies of a happy future were uttered by the prophets to whom they are at present assigned, or have been inserted by later editors in their writings. That many such prophecies originated in the latter way can hardly be denied, but it is a great exaggeration of a sound principle to relegate such passages as a whole to the post-exilic period.

8. The scope of the older prophecy is to be observed; it was not limited to Israel, but embraced many countries and great kingdoms (see vol. i, p. 78).

evil. It is tempting to adopt the reading of some MSS. and of the Vulgate 'famine,' since it is awkward that the general term for disaster should be coupled with two specific types of calamity. It is not unusual for Jeremiah to speak of sword, famine, and pestilence. This combination may, however, be responsible for the reading 'famine' here, and the use of 'war' instead of the sword suggests that we have not that combination in this passage. The LXX omits 'and of evil, and of pestilence.'

9. The close of the sentence is rather carelessly expressed. The meaning required is that then it shall be known that Yahweh has truly sent that prophet. Till then the Divine origin of his message must remain in doubt.

10. Hananiah is not at all impressed by Jeremiah's appeal to experience. He snaps the yoke on Jeremiah's neck, affirming that thus Yahweh would break the yoke of Babylon from the neck of the nations. The act is something more than a mere symbol, it embodies the prophetic word which is endowed with a Divine energy that works out its own fulfilment (see vol. i, pp. 77, 78).

11. The LXX omits 'of Nebuchadnezzar' and 'within two full the presence of all the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD: Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon within two full years from off the neck of all the nations. And the prophet Jeremiah went his

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years,' in both cases correctly; the latter addition has been made from 2. In such a situation brevity is a sign of authenticity.

Jeremiah went his way. It is surprising that he makes no reply. Cornill argues forcibly that Jeremiah could not have remained silent in response to such a challenge without denying his God and abandoning his people to a lie. Accordingly he strikes out the clause as a gloss. There is much to be said for this view. It is hard to believe that Jeremiah was shaken in his own conviction by Hananiah's action. His opponent may have sincerely believed in his own inspiration, he may have snapped the yoke on Jeremiah's neck in a prophetic ecstasy, and the ring of certainty may have been heard in his utterance 'Thus saith Yahweh.' But Jeremiah's own convictions were not such as could be disturbed by prophetic states, even though they were not consciously simulated, or prophetic formulae, sincerely though they might be repeated. His insight into God's purpose was not a thing of yesterday, his assurance was too deeply rooted to bend before this breath of opposition. He was a candid and a humble man; but he could not have seriously asked himself the question whether Hananiah might not after all be right. We may then rest assured that whatever he did, he had no intention of suggesting that he doubted his own message. But would not silence have suggested this? It might no doubt be urged that his attitude had been too long and too well known for such an inference to be drawn; that he had withstood the prophets too long for any significance to be attached to his leaving Hananiah in possession of the field; that he had just given his testimony with the utmost directness. And yet we may doubt whether he could have risked the moral impression which would have been made on the assembly by his failure to meet Hananiah's action with any reaffirmation of the message with which he had been charged. To strike out the clause may seem a violent cutting of the knot, all the more that its very difficulty may be urged in favour of its authenticity. But, as Cornill points out, it may have grown out of the words 'Go and tell Hananiah' in 13, since the command appeared to imply that he had left the presence of his antagonist. The verb 'to go,' however, is frequently used in this book to introduce a message with which the prophet is entrusted, and it seems to have become a mere formula, having lost its proper significance (cf. especially xxxix. 16). Accordingly we should not press it here to imply

way. Then the word of the LORD came unto Jere- 12
miah, after that Hananiah the prophet had broken the
bar from off the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, saying,
Go, and tell Hananiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD: 13
Thou hast broken the bars of wood; but thou shalt make
in their stead bars of iron. For thus saith the LORD of 14
hosts, the God of Israel: I have put a yoke of iron upon
the neck of all these nations, that they may serve Nebu-
chadnezzar king of Babylon; and they shall serve him:
and I have given him the beasts of the field also. Then 15
said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet,
Hear now, Hananiah; the LORD hath not sent thee;
but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. Therefore 16
thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will send thee away from
off the face of the earth: this year thou shalt die, because
thou hast spoken rebellion against the LORD. So Hana- 17
niah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.

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that the two prophets had been parted. And 12 reads strangely if they had been.

13. If the policy of Hananiah was followed, they would be chastised with scorpions instead of with whips: cf. Amos v. 19. The yoke of Babylon would be fastened again on their neck, but a yoke far heavier and more galling, and one which no strength of theirs could break.

thou shalt make. We should probably read, with the LXX, 'I will make:' cf. 14, 'I have put a yoke of iron.' It is hardly appropriate to represent Hananiah as making the iron bars, since Jeremiah had made the wooden bars at God's command.

14. the beasts of the field: see note on xxvii. 6.

16. I will send thee away. As Hitzig points out, the phrase is chosen with reference to 'Yahweh hath not sent thee' in 15.

because . . . the LORD. This clause is omitted in the LXX. It is a quotation from Deut. xiii. 5. It is appropriate here in so far as the passage in Deuteronomy is directed against false prophets, inappropriate since the 'defection' there denounced is an incitement to idolatry.

17. The fact of Hananiah's death, told with such impressive brevity, without comment or elaboration, is to be accepted as historical; so that while his prediction that within two years

29 Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah

Babylon's yoke should be broken was discredited, Jeremiah's prediction that within that year Hananiah should die was verified in less than three months. The LXX is briefer still, 'And he died in the seventh month.' The swift fulfilment may have done something to enhance the respect paid to Jeremiah's advice, and take the heart out of the fanatics who were screaming for a vigorous foreign policy. Cheyne says: 'This might be a case of second sight. Cf. St. Adamnan's account of a prophecy of St. Columba that a certain boy would die at the end of the week' (*The Two Religions of Israel*, p. 58). He had treated the narrative more sceptically in his *Decline and Fall of the Kingdom of Judah*, p. 77.

xxix. JEREMIAH COUNSELS THE EXILES TO SETTLE DOWN IN BABYLON, SINCE THERE IS NO HOPE OF SPEEDY RELEASE.

The links which connect this chapter with the two preceding have been already indicated in the Introduction to xxvii–xxix (see pp. 38, 39). Schmidt regards the correspondence with Babylon as 'scarcely historical' (*Enc. Bib.* 2387); and Cheyne considers the central statement of the chapter that the Babylonian oppression shall last only for a time to be certainly unauthentic (*Enc. Bib.* 3879); but recent commentators have for the most part recognized a very substantial historical element in the chapter, which in its original form was probably included in Baruch's biography of Jeremiah. The detailed references to persons and events can hardly rest on imagination, and the situation to which the letter is addressed is entirely natural with a people whose theological beliefs would predispose them to anticipate that the exile would prove a very temporary episode in their history. Equally convinced with Jeremiah (xxiv) of their superiority to the rotten remnant left behind in Jerusalem, they could not, without a complete inversion of their settled convictions, have thought of their own exile as permanent while Jerusalem continued to stand. And since they could not bring themselves to believe in the destruction of Yahweh's city, the downfall of the State, and the captivity of the people, they naturally anticipated a speedy return to Palestine, and were encouraged by their prophets in this cherished delusion. That Jeremiah, while opposing this expectation among those who were left behind, sought also to disabuse the exiles, is only natural, especially in view of his more friendly esteem for them. The date of the letter is not clear. But we may assume that it was sent quite early in Zedekiah's reign, probably in 596 or 595 B. C., when the exiles had been only a short time in their new home. It was not, we may assume, sent in 594 B. C., since in that year Zedekiah, instead of sending messengers to Babylon, the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders of the captivity, and to the priests, and to the

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paid a personal visit to that city (li. 59). Accordingly we must place the incidents of this chapter at a somewhat earlier period than those of xxvii-xxviii. On the expansion the original form has undergone see the notes.

xxix. 1-9. This is the letter sent by Jeremiah, by the hand of Zedekiah's messengers, to those taken to Babylon with Jeconiah. Yahweh bids you settle down in your own homes, marry and rear families, and seek the peace of Babylon, for it is your own peace. And do not be deceived by your prophets, who lie to you in My Name.

10-14. For after seventy years I will bring you back, since I entertain thoughts of good for you. You will pray and I will hear, you will seek Me with all your heart and find Me, and I will gather you from all the nations of your dispersion.

16-19. For on those who are left behind in Jerusalem I am sending sword, famine, and pestilence, and will make them like uneatable figs. They shall be an execration among all the nations of their dispersion, because they have not listened to My words.

20, 15, 21-23. And listen, you that are exiles. Because you say Yahweh has raised up prophets for us in Babylon, I will give Ahab and Zedekiah the false prophets into Nebuchadnezzar's hand, and he shall slay them by a death which shall become a proverb among you; for they have committed adultery and spoken lies in My Name.

24-32. Shemaiah has sent to Jerusalem, remonstrating with Zephaniah the overseer of the Temple for his remissness in not punishing Jeremiah for his letter to the exiles bidding them, in view of the long captivity before them, settle down in Babylon. Zephaniah reads the letter to Jeremiah, who predicts that Shemaiah for his false prophecies shall have no man to dwell among this people, and shall not see the good which Yahweh will do to it.

xxix. 1. the residue of the elders. This has occasioned much discussion. The LXX reads simply 'the elders,' and this is adopted by Giesebrecht and Rothstein. It is, however, as Duhm and Cornill urge, much easier to understand the omission than the insertion of the word rendered 'the residue of.' Several explanations have been offered. Some think that the residue is mentioned, since some might have died on the journey or since their arrival in Babylonia. But the term 'residue' suggests a depletion of their numbers greater than is at all likely from such a cause in so short a period; moreover, the gaps made by death would have been filled up. And even had some of the elders died, it would have been quite irrelevant for the writer to take account

prophets, and to all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon:
2 (after that Jeconiah the king, and the queen-mother, and the eunuchs, *and* the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen, and the smiths, were departed from Jeru-
3 salem;) by the hand of Elasah the son of Shaphan, and

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of this in the choice of his expression. Hitzig explains that the phrase means the elders who are not also priests or prophets, but the author does not say the priests and prophets and the rest of the elders, because there would be priests and prophets who were not elders. But this explanation, though approved by Graf, can hardly be accepted. If the normal order had been felt to give an incorrect suggestion, then the sentence would have been cast in a different form rather than the order inverted in this unnatural way. Duhm thinks that there may have been an attempt at escape or opposition to regulations, which had cost some of the elders their liberty or their lives. Baruch might have given an account of this, or he might have presupposed it as well known. This is possible, but Jeremiah would probably have alluded to it in his letter; it would have served admirably to enforce his exhortation. The choice seems to lie between the omission of the word, with the LXX, and the suggestion made by Duhm, which is accepted by Cornill. The elders seem to have had a good deal of authority entrusted to them by the Babylonians; they are prominent in Ezekiel. Duhm omits the reference to the priests and prophets, and 15 does not favour the view that the prophets were explicitly addressed. We should probably omit, with the LXX, the relative sentence 'whom . . . Babylon,' and, if so, perhaps also the words 'and to all the people.'

2. This is struck out by Cornill and others. It breaks the connexion between 1 and 3, and is largely taken from xxiv. 1^b, 2 Kings xxiv. 12–16. Giesebrecht retains the reference to the deportation of Jeconiah to Babylon, but regards 'and the queen-mother . . . the smiths' as an expansion based on the passages mentioned. This is better than the elimination of the whole verse, since the note of time is not superfluous.

the queen-mother: see notes on xiii. 18, 19, xxii. 25 f.

smiths: see note on xxiv. 1.

3. The object of this diplomatic mission is unknown; perhaps it was in charge of the yearly tribute. Elasah was apparently the brother of Ahikam, mentioned as Jeremiah's protector in xxvi. 24 (see note), and of the Gemariah in whose chamber Baruch read the roll (xxxvi. 10), and who interceded with Jehoiakim not to

Gemariah the son of Hilkiah, (whom Zedekiah king of Judah sent unto Babylon to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,) saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God 4 of Israel, unto all the captivity, whom I have caused to be carried away captive from Jerusalem unto Babylon: Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, 5 and eat the fruit of them; take ye wives, and beget sons 6 and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply ye there, and be not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused 7

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burn it (xxxvi. 25). From the fact that he took Jeremiah's letter we may infer that, like his brothers, he was friendly to the prophet. Of Gemariah the son of Hilkiah (of course to be distinguished from his namesake the son of Shaphan) we know nothing further. He was not, we may take it for granted, Jeremiah's brother, but may have been the son of the chief priest of the Temple.

5. Jeremiah dissuades the exiles from regarding their stay in Babylonia as just a passing experience. They must make up their minds to a long period of captivity. They must look on Babylon as their home, build houses and plant gardens, renouncing the pleasing delusion that they would soon be restored to their old homes in Jerusalem.

6. This verse seems to presuppose that just as some refused to build and plant in this interim condition, so they refused to marry. The refusal would rest on different grounds; houses and gardens involved labour and expense, which would be largely wasted if they left Babylon. Wives and children they could take back with them, but young children would add greatly to the difficulties of the journey. Cornill thinks that a considerable proportion of the exiles would be young, unmarried men, and that there would not be Jewish wives for them in at all adequate numbers. He suggests that Jeremiah may have meant that instead of remaining unmarried in the hope of speedy return home, they should marry Gentile women.

that . . . daughters: omitted in LXX.

7. The hearts of the exiles would naturally be hot with hatred for the oppressor, and if they prayed with reference to him, it would be for his downfall. But Jeremiah bids them acquire houses and gardens, that they may forge links which will bind them to the new land, and make its interest identical with their

you to be carried away captive, and pray unto the LORD
8 for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. For
thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Let not
your prophets that be in the midst of you, and your
diviners, deceive you, neither hearken ye to your dreams
9 which ye [a] cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy
falsely unto you in my name: I have not sent them,
10 saith the LORD. For thus saith the LORD, After seventy

[a] †Or, *dream*

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own. They are to pray for its peace; it is true the injunction is recommended by a self-regarding motive, but it was inspired by wise regard for their welfare, and altruistic appeals would have been wasted on such an audience.

the city. If the text is correct, the term probably indicates no one city, such as Babylon, but the city in which you may happen to be. The exiles would not be concentrated in one place. But we should probably read 'the land.'

8, 9. Duhm regards these verses as an insertion, because no account is given of what the false prophets said, and because it is not mentioned till 15 that the exiles believed that they had prophets among them. The former reason is unimportant; what all knew there was no need to repeat, and the context makes it plain. The latter reason, which has decided Cornill to follow Duhm, has more substance. But it is not at all decisive; 8, 9 contain a warning against their prophets in general; 15 introduces, in its true connexion, a threat against two prophets.

ye cause to be dreamed. The causative conjugation of this verb occurs nowhere else, and the thought itself is somewhat strange. If the text is correct, the meaning is apparently that the people consulted the prophets and set them dreaming that they might be able to give them an oracle. It is possible that the conjugation is used in the simple sense 'ye dream.' It would be better, however, to secure this sense, which is given by the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate, by striking out the initial letter of the verb as due to mistaken repetition of the final letter of the pronoun. It would perhaps be better still to read 'they dream' (as Cornill); it is not the people generally who go to the prophets to have their dreams interpreted, but, as xxiii. 25–28 shows, the prophets who give lying oracles on the basis of their dreams. If so, we should also, of course, read 'their dreams.'

10. This verse ought not to be omitted; it is most appropriate that Jeremiah's counsel should be driven home by the reminder years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that 11 I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you [a] hope in your latter end. And ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto 12 me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, 13 and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD, and 14 I will [b] turn again your captivity, and I will gather you

[a] Heb. *a latter end and hope.* [b] Or, *return to*

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that the Babylonian dominion will last seventy years, and only when this period is accomplished will the exile be brought to an end. On the 'seventy years' see note on xxv. 11.

11. I know. The pronoun is emphatic, similarly 'I think.' Several scholars take the meaning to be, The prophets are ignorant but I know. But probably this is not the contrast intended. The point is rather that although the long delay may give the impression that Yahweh's attitude to Judah is one of settled hostility, He has from the very beginning of her misfortune entertained purposes of granting her a future and a hope, i. e. a future full of hope. The people will say 'From Yahweh my way is hid' (Isa. xl. 27); but His wrath does not hide from Him His ultimate goal of mercy, He keeps it steadily in view all the time.

12-14. The LXX has a much shorter text. In 12 it reads 'And pray unto me and I will hearken unto you.' In 14 it omits everything after the first clause, 'And I will be found of you.' In the latter point it is plainly superior; the exiles addressed were in Babylonia, not dispersed among the nations, and the verse is composed of stock phrases. It is not so clear that the omission in 12 is original; the text, however, can hardly be correct: 'and ye shall go' yields no satisfactory sense and spoils the parallelism. Several suggestions have been made; the sense required is, 'And ye shall call upon me, and I will hear you;' i. e. though you are banished from My land and My sanctuary, I still hear the cry from your distant home.

14. I will be found of you: LXX reads 'I will appear to you:' cf. xxxi. 3. If this is part of the letter, the LXX is to be preferred, since 'find' occurs in 13.

turn again your captivity. The original sense of this expression is still much disputed; since Ewald first proposed it, many

from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again unto the place whence I caused you to be
15 carried away captive. For ye have said, The LORD hath

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have held the view that it meant originally 'to reverse the fortunes of,' a sense which it bears in Job xlii. 10 and apparently in Ezek. xvi. 53 ('of Sodom and her daughters'). In most cases, however, the rendering in R.V. is applicable, and may well represent the original meaning. See Driver's note on Deut. xxx. 3, with the supplementary note in the *Addenda*.

15–20. These verses create serious difficulties. Verse 15 connects with nothing in the preceding context but 8, 9, nor in what follows till we reach 21. Moreover in the LXX (except in Lucian's recension) 16–20 is omitted. This in itself suggests at least that 15 should stand immediately before 21, as it does in the LXX and also in Lucian's recension where it comes after 16–20. The question as to the originality of 16–20 is somewhat more difficult, but the weight of evidence is strongly in favour of its exclusion from the text. The omission in the LXX might be accounted for by the passing of the scribe's eye from 'Babylon' in 15 to 'Babylon' in 20, or assuming that 15 stood before 21, from 'For' in 16 to 'For' in 15. It is also true that the connexion of 15 with 13 is not easy. It is difficult to see why a post-exilic editor should have inserted the passage, the distinction between the Jews in exile with Jehoiachin and those in Jerusalem with Zedekiah having lost all significance with the destruction of the Jewish State. The inclusion of the verses in Lucian's recension also favours their authenticity. On the other hand, the passage has little relevance in this context; why should Jeremiah break off from his counsel to the exiles and deal with the situation in Jerusalem? Why should he say that Yahweh will make those left in Jerusalem 'like vile figs,' which implies that xxiv was known to the readers; and yet with a change in the application, the figure referring in xxiv to character, here to destiny? In 18, moreover, the writer forgets his assumed situation before the fall of Jerusalem, and speaks of the dispersion as already accomplished; similarly in 19, 'Ye would not hear,' if the text is correct, can hardly be addressed to the first group of exiles as a reason for the dispersion which had overtaken the Jews left behind with Zedekiah. Some of these difficulties are removed by the omission of 17^b (from 'I will make')–19, and Giesebrecht considers that the rest of the passage ought to be regarded as an authentic part of the letter. But this excision is itself a rather arbitrary critical operation, and destroys the link of contrast between 19 and 20, 'ye would not hear . . . Hear ye therefore.'

raised us up prophets in Babylon. [S] For thus saith 16
the LORD concerning the king that sitteth upon the
throne of David, and concerning all the people that
dwell in this city, your brethren that are not gone forth
with you into captivity; thus saith the LORD of hosts: 17
Behold, I will send upon them the sword, the famine,
and the pestilence, and will make them like vile figs,
that cannot be eaten, they are so bad. And I will 18

It is also questionable whether, if the verses are retained even in this modified form, the transposition of 15 to follow 20 and precede 21 can be justified. It is not improbably a rearrangement due to Lucian himself. But if 15 immediately followed 13 (or 14 if that be authentic), the conclusion is inevitable that 16–20 is no part of the original text, and that Lucian's inclusion of it does not represent the true LXX. It is a late insertion based on earlier passages in the book, especially xxiv. 8–10, and crowded with characteristic expressions. Why a later writer should have inserted it is not clear; possibly it reflects a post-exilic estimate of the relative merits of the Jews in Babylon and those in the dispersion, together with 'the people of the land' in Palestine. But this is on the whole improbable, and we must content ourselves with the melancholy reflection that a reader thought the insertion of Jeremiah's unfavourable judgement on the Jews in Jerusalem would improve and complete the prophet's letter to the exiles in Babylonia.

15. For. Since this verse is to be connected with 21, we should probably render 'Because.' The exiles congratulated themselves that though they had been banished from Yahweh's land, His power extended even to Babylon, and there He raised up prophets to announce that He would soon break the Babylonian yoke. Ezekiel, who was quite one with Jeremiah in his judgement of the situation, did not receive his call till a few years later. Jeremiah warns his readers that they will be able to estimate the value to be attached to the message of these prophets by the fate which is soon to overtake them, and learn how premature their rejoicing had been.

16. the king: i.e. Zedekiah.

17. The former part of the verse is taken from xxiv. 10, the latter from xxiv. 8. The word rendered 'vile' is much stronger than the corresponding word in xxiv; it is derived from the same root as the word rendered 'a horrible thing' in v. 30.

18. The former part of the verse is largely a repetition of 17. The latter part is based on xxiv. 9 (cf. also xv. 4 with the note). The details are varied from xxiv. 9; in particular 'I shall drive'

pursue after them with the sword, with the famine, and with the pestilence, and will deliver them to be [a] tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms of the earth, to be an execration, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven
19 them: because they have not hearkened to my words, saith the LORD, wherewith I sent unto them my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them; but ye
20 would not hear, saith the LORD. Hear ye therefore the word of the LORD, all ye of the captivity, whom I have sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon.

21 [B] Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel,

[a] †Or, *a terror unto*

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becomes 'I have driven,' and the tense ought not to be assimilated to that in xxiv. 9, the interpolator betrays himself by it.

19. Cf. vii. 25, 26, xi. 7, 8, xxv. 4.

ye would not hear. Perhaps we should read 'they would not hear,' but it is more likely that the interpolator has here again forgotten his assumed standpoint.

20. This verse is designed as a link to connect the interpolated verses with the oracle that follows.

all ye . . . Babylon: cf. xxiv. 5.

21. This verse completes the sentence begun in 15. We know nothing of Ahab and Zedekiah beyond what we learn from these passages. The LXX omits the names of their fathers, but we may be sure that these names are not inventions of a scribe. The execution of these prophets would be a punishment for treasonable utterances, such as the proclamation of the approaching downfall of Babylon and liberation of the Jews. The reference to the mode of death may possibly have been added to bring the prediction into more explicit conformity with the event which doubtless ensued as described in 22. But it may be an original part of the letter. It is true that there is a play on the name Kolaiah in the word rendered 'roasted' (as there is also in the word for 'curse'). But we have no valid reason for the inference that this gave rise to the story that they were put to death in this way; though this particular word was presumably chosen for the sake of the assonance, and we are probably to regard the word as equivalent to 'burn,' not necessarily to roast before a fire or bake in an oven. Jeremiah would be aware that such a punishment, almost unknown

concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and concerning Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, which prophesy a lie unto you in my name: Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall slay
them before your eyes; and of them shall be taken up 22
a curse by all the captives of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab,
whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire: because 23

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among the Hebrews (Gen. xxxviii. 24, Lev. xxi. 9), was in use among the Babylonians (cf. Dan. iii).

22. Then their names would still be on men's lips, no longer as prophets, but in a gruesome formula of imprecation used by exiles to fellow exiles. Cursing in the East, however, goes to much greater lengths in expression than is common in the West, and is not to be taken too seriously, even though the Divine Name is invoked for its fulfilment.

23. The fate of these two prophets is due to their immorality and their unjustifiable claim to speak as Yahweh's messengers (for the combination of the two in the prophets of Jerusalem see xxiii. 14). Obviously Nebuchadnezzar did not punish them with their horrible death for the second of these offences, and it is hardly probable that he did so for the former. Burning (i. e. probably burning alive, though many think the offender was stoned and then the corpse was burnt) is the penalty prescribed in the Law of Holiness for the unchastity of a priest's daughter (Lev. xxi. 9), and that pronounced on Tamar by Judah (Gen. xxxviii. 24) for the same offence. But in these cases 'the woman pays,' though in Lev. xx. 14 all the guilty parties are burnt for a particular type of incest; and while the death penalty is inflicted for adultery on both the guilty parties (Deut. xxii. 22, Lev. xx. 10), it was not by burning but by stoning (Ezek. xvi. 38, 40, xxiii. 45, 47, John viii. 5), and, as we learn from the passages in Ezekiel, by thrusting them through with swords to dispatch them. In the Code of Hammurabi burning is the penalty for a peculiarly flagrant form of incest (§ 157), but adulterers are strangled and cast into the water (§ 129). The Jews would have no power of inflicting death, but it is unlikely that they would take the case before the Babylonian courts, or that so ghastly a sentence would be pronounced. The offence for which Nebuchadnezzar roasted them must have been treason or possibly blasphemy against the gods of Babylon; but Yahweh punished them for the offences mentioned by delivering them into his hand (21).

they have wrought folly in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and have spoken words in my name falsely, which I commanded them not; and I am he that knoweth, and am witness, saith the LORD.

24 [BS] And [a] concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite thou

[a] Or, *unto*

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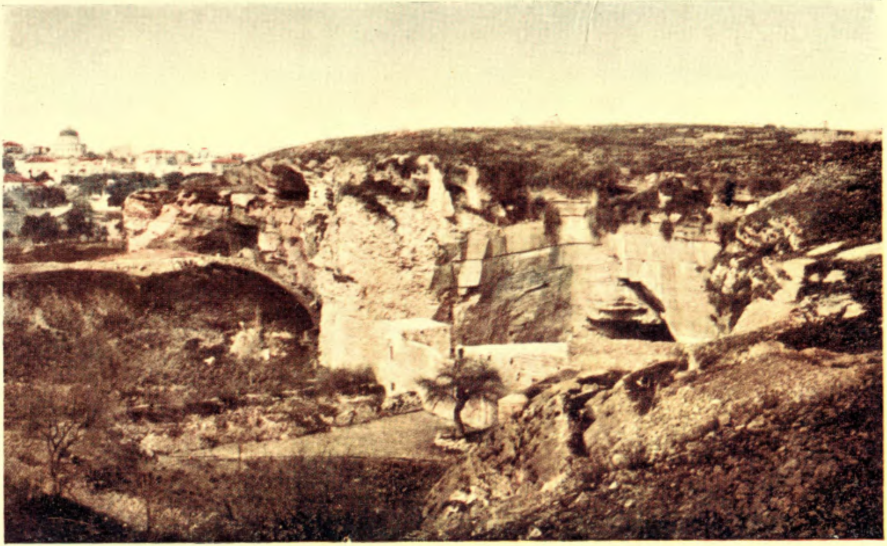
wrought folly in Israel. This expression is commonly (though not exclusively: cf. Joshua vii. 15) applied to breaches of chastity (Gen. xxxiv. 7, Deut. xxii. 21, Judges xx. 6, 2 Sam. xiii. 12). Accordingly it seems here to have reference to the former of the two offences to be enumerated. The term 'folly' is not an adequate rendering of the Hebrew term; both 'wisdom' and 'folly' had for the Hebrews a moral rather than an intellectual connotation; and the term used here, as Driver says, 'denotes a state of mind, or an action, marked by utter disregard of moral or spiritual feeling.'

24–32. We now learn of an attempt by Shemaiah, one of the exiles, to have Jeremiah punished for his letter. The section is far from clear, and the LXX diverges considerably from the Hebrew. It is true that the LXX gives quite a perverted impression of the matter, since it turns the former part of Shemaiah's letter to Zephaniah (26) into an address to him by Jeremiah, and the rest (27, 28) into a remonstrance with both of them by Jeremiah for their abuse of him; and crowns the confusion by saying, in harmony with the Hebrew text, that Zephaniah read the letter (which has not been previously mentioned) to Jeremiah! Naturally this incoherent jumble cannot come into competition with the Hebrew text. But it would be too hasty to infer that it is without value for the restoration of the original. The present Hebrew text also is in some confusion. Jeremiah is told to deliver the following message from God to Shemaiah. The message, however, does not follow because the author goes on to assign the reason for it, namely, that Shemaiah has sent letters to Jerusalem, and then quotes his letter to Zephaniah at length, and concludes with the statement that Zephaniah read the letter to Jeremiah. Lastly we have the statement that then the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah, bidding him send a message about Shemaiah, not to Shemaiah himself, but to the exiles. As compared with the LXX the main points are quite clear in the Hebrew, and no one could be seriously misled as to the course of events. Nor is it incredible that Baruch was himself responsible for the inconsequent form of the passage. It would be better to accept



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JEREMIAH'S GROTTO, JERUSALEM.

shalt speak, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, the 25
God of Israel, saying, Because thou hast sent letters in thine
own name unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, and
to Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest, and to all
the priests, saying, The LORD hath made thee priest in 26
the stead of Jehoiada the priest, that ye should be officers

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a reconstruction of the text which would give us a narrative pure and simple. This involves striking out the command to Jeremiah that he should speak thus to Shemaiah. It would then be best to treat 'Concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite' as the title of the paragraph, and begin the narrative 'This man sent letters in his own name.' Or we could read 'Shemaiah the Nehelamite sent letters in his own name.'

Duhm, to whom the chief credit for this reconstruction belongs, thinks that Baruch said nothing as to the outcome of the letter, and that his narrative closed with the statement that Zephaniah read it to the prophet, 30-32 being an addition, imitative in character and inappropriate in content. But while the passage may have been expanded, it probably contains a genuine kernel. The story would, in fact, have closed very abruptly with 29.

24. Shemaiah the Nehelamite. Nothing is known of him beyond what we learn from this passage. It is uncertain whether 'the Nehelamite' designates him as member of a particular family, or as belonging to a particular place, which is otherwise unknown to us.

25. Shemaiah writes in his own name, not in the name of Yahweh. It is questionable whether the plural 'letters' is correct. The Syriac reads the singular, and only one letter is otherwise mentioned. The plural is used for a single letter, 2 Kings xix. 14, xx. 12. The LXX omits the word altogether. We should omit, with the LXX, 'unto all the people that are at Jerusalem, and,' with 'and to all the priests,' since Zephaniah is addressed in the singular; and the duty, which Shemaiah remonstrates with him for disregarding, is his own duty, not that of the priests in general.

Zephaniah: see note on xxi. 1. He is said in lii. 24, 2 Kings xxv. 18 to have been 'the second priest,' i.e. second to Seraiah the chief priest. He was twice sent by Zedekiah to Jeremiah to ask for an oracle: xxi. 1, xxxvii. 3. He was among those executed by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah after the capture of Jerusalem (lii. 24-27, 2 Kings xxv. 18-21).

26. in the stead of Jehoiada the priest. In themselves the words rather favour the view that Jehoiada was Zephaniah's immediate predecessor. If so, we know nothing further of him.

in the house of the LORD, for every man that is mad, and
maketh himself a prophet, that thou shouldest put him
27 in the stocks and in [a]shackles. Now therefore, why hast

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[a] †Or, *the collar*

It is, however, more probable that the reference is to the famous priest Jehoiada, who deposed Athaliah and set Joash on the throne. We read that he 'appointed officers over the house of Yahweh' (2 Kings xi. 18). Their function would be to preserve order, and prevent the services from being disturbed by noisy people who took themselves to be prophets. Of course discrimination had to be practised, since the conduct of a prophet whom Yahweh had truly sent might be externally indistinguishable from that of a deluded enthusiast. Pashhur, Zephaniah's predecessor, had exercised his disciplinary function in Jeremiah's case, having formed the same estimate of him as Shemaiah did now.

officers. The plural is difficult: some think it refers to Jehoiada and Zephaniah; others, including Graf, interpret 'Yahweh hath made thee priest, that officers may be in the house of Yahweh,' i. e. Zephaniah's position as priest carries with it the duty of appointing Temple officers. But we should simply substitute the singular with LXX, Syriac, Targum, and Vulgate, 'that thou shouldest be an officer.' On the duties of the overseer cf. note on xx. 1. It would be precarious to assume that the duty here mentioned was all that Zephaniah had to perform, and infer that the number of those who had to be dealt with was large.

every man . . . prophet. Probably we are not to distinguish two classes here, those who are mad, and those who pose a prophets; the two clauses refer to the same person, and mea any one whose madness takes the form of making himself out to b a prophet. The early prophets had been distinguished by thei eccentricities, their raving enthusiasm; they sometimes impresse people with the idea that they were mad (2 Kings ix. 11). Whe Saul was under the influence of the 'evil spirit from God,' i. some form of mental disorder, 'he prophesied' (R.V. margi 'raved') 'in the midst of the house' (1 Sam. xviii. 10). Cf. 1 Sam x. 10-13, xix. 20-24. The great prophets from the eighth centur onwards seem to have risen largely, if not completely, above thes ecstatic states and eccentric habits, but probably the lower typ of prophet still exhibited the old characteristics in no slight degre If two classes are mentioned here, we must remember that t madman is often regarded by primitive peoples as divinely i spired.

in the stocks and in shackles. For 'the stocks' see note xx. 2. The word rendered 'shackles' occurs here only, and

thou not rebuked Jeremiah of Anathoth, which maketh
himself a prophet to you, forasmuch as he hath sent unto 28
us in Babylon, saying, *The captivity* is long: build ye
houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat
the fruit of them? And Zephaniah the priest read this 29
letter in the ears of Jeremiah the prophet. Then came 30
the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, Send to all 31
them of the captivity, saying, Thus saith the LORD concerning
Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because that Shemaiah
hath prophesied unto you, and I sent him not, and
he hath caused you to trust in a lie; therefore thus saith 32

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meaning is disputed. It is now generally taken, on the analogy of an Arabic word, to be an iron band fastened round the neck, so that the rendering in the margin, 'collar,' fairly represents the Hebrew.

28. As sufficient proof of Jeremiah's 'mad' condition, Shemaiah thinks it enough to quote his advice to the exiles to settle down in their new home, since the time was long ere the captivity should be ended. The sanity of the prophet was never more apparent than when he administered this cold douche of common sense to their fevered enthusiasm.

29. Zephaniah does not follow the example set by his predecessor (xx. 1-3), but communicates Shemaiah's letter to the prophet, which we may fairly take as a sign of sympathy with his standpoint.

31. It is objected to the narrative that it betrays no consciousness of any difficulty in sending the prophecy to Babylon. Probably the opportunities of communication were more numerous than we might anticipate. That when it reached Babylon it would circulate among the exiles may be inferred from what had happened to the previous letter.

prophesied. There is no previous indication in the story that Shemaiah was one of the prophets, and there is thus a suspicious parallel with the case of Pashhur (xx. 6). But there was no occasion for an earlier reference, and there is an antecedent probability that this antagonist of Jeremiah should, like Hananiah, belong to the ranks of the prophets.

32. It is strange that Jeremiah should include as an element in Shemaiah's punishment that he should not behold the good that Yahweh would do to His people. This seems to refer to the return from exile, but since Jeremiah did not expect this for the LORD, Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite, and his seed; he shall not have a man to dwell among this people, neither shall he behold the good that I will do unto my people, saith the LORD: because he hath spoken rebellion against the LORD.

30 [S] The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD,

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seventy years, it would have been remarkable if Shemaiah had been alive at the time. The LXX reads 'there shall not be a man of them in the midst of you to see the good,' which is to be preferred since it gives an acceptable sense, that none of Shemaiah's descendants should see the restoration accomplished. The LXX omits the last clause, see xxviii. 16.

xxx, xxxi. THE GLORIOUS FUTURE OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

These chapters break the series of biographical sections. Originally we may suppose that they closed the collection of Jeremiah's prophecies which, before they were united with Baruch's memoirs, consisted of i–xxv, xlvi–li, xxx–xxxi. When the fusion of the prophecies with the memoirs took place, xxx, xxxi was presumably placed in its present position because xxix, with its references to the restoration (xxix. 10 ff., 32), seemed to form a suitable introduction to it.

This section has for a long time challenged the suspicious scrutiny of critics. Movers, impressed by the striking similarities between these chapters and the latter part of Isaiah, put forward the view that the chapters had been worked over by the Second Isaiah. This view was adopted by de Wette and Hitzig, but the three scholars differed widely in detail. In reply Graf admitted the similarity with Isa. xl–lxvi, but urged that this was accounted for by similarity of content, and that the striking coincidences in expression were to be explained as due to imitation of Jeremiah on the part of the Second Isaiah. He met Hitzig's accusation that the chapters were characterized by lack of connexion, with the counter-charge that this could properly be brought only against the prophecy as Hitzig had reconstructed it, and with the demonstration that the prophecy, as we have it, is a well-connected whole. The force of Graf's plea for the authenticity, combined with the divergence between those who impugned it and the unsatisfactoriness of their reconstructions, had the effect of rehabilitating the Jeremianic authorship in the eyes of critics, till Stade and Smend rejected it altogether. The grounds for this conclusion were not communicated by Stade in the footnote in which h saying, Thus speaketh the LORD, the God of Israel, saying, 2

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stated it (*Geschichte Israels*, i. 643), but Smend examined the question with some fullness in the first edition of his *Alttestamentliche Religionsgeschichte.* He argued that these chapters did not even spring out of the exile, but presupposed the return which is not mentioned. Judah is in a miserable condition, the prophet looks forward to a speedy deliverance which is to come through the restoration of Ephraim and its reunion with Judah. It was true that Jeremiah had predicted the restoration of Ephraim (iii), but he had combined the restoration of Ephraim with the rejection of Judah, while the author of xxx, xxxi combined the expected return of Ephraim with the already accomplished return of Judah. Further, whereas Jeremiah expected the exile to last a long while, the author of xxx, xxxi anticipated a speedy restoration. Since the prophecy was written in Palestine (xxxi. 8, 21), but after the destruction of Jerusalem (xxx. 18, xxxi. 40), it can have been written by Jeremiah, if he was its author, only in the few months which elapsed between the fall of Jerusalem and his compulsory journey to Egypt. But a longer time seems to have elapsed, Judah's wound is seen to be incurable, the nations have abandoned her. The study of Smend's discussion convinced the present writer, before Giesebrecht's commentary came into his hands, that the insertion of a considerable non-Jeremianic element had to be admitted, but that there was no justification for the relegation of the whole to the post-exilic period, and in particular for the rejection of the prophecy of the New Covenant.

Smend's arguments were submitted to a careful examination by Giesebrecht in the first edition of his commentary. He drew a distinction between the two chapters. He gave up the Jeremianic origin of xxx entirely, having been convinced by Smend's arguments that 18–21 constituted no exception, a point on which he had previously hesitated. But in xxxi he recognized the authenticity of 2–6, 15–20, 27–34. The two former, which deal with the restoration of Ephraim, he assigned to Jeremiah's earliest period. Duhm largely agreed with Giesebrecht as to these passages, accepting xxxi. 2–6, 15–22^{a}. But he also retained xxx. 12–15 for Jeremiah. On the other hand he followed Smend in rejecting, though only after long hesitation and with much reluctance, Jeremiah's authorship of the New Covenant passage. Erbt accepted xxxi. 2–6, 15–17, 18–20. Cornill considered that the Jeremianic elements in the chapters were xxxi. 2–5, 9^{b}, 15–22^{b}, which belonged to the first period of the prophet's work, and xxxi. 31–34, the prophecy on the New Covenant spoken after the destruction of Jerusalem. Rothstein, on the contrary, is prepared to recognize a good part of the poetical passages in both chapters as Jeremianic.

Write thee all the words that I have spoken unto thee in

This survey will have shown that there is considerable consensus of opinion among recent writers that little if any Jeremianic matter is to be found in xxx, but that the prophecy of Ephraim's restoration in xxxi is largely authentic. On the other hand there is still a sharp divergence of opinion on the most important of all the problems raised in connexion with the criticism of the book, the authorship of the great oracle on the New Covenant, xxxi. 31-34. The detailed discussion can most profitably be reserved for the notes. Here a few general observations on the two chapters may be offered. In view of the unity which pervades these chapters we should regard them as a single well-planned composition, which must belong in its present form to the post-exilic period. This date is established by the situation presupposed in it, and by its relations to II Isaiah. Had Jer. xxx, xxxi been used by the Second Isaiah, as Graf maintained, we should have expected him to draw on it throughout, but the points of contact are confined to certain portions. Accordingly we may infer that at least the sections which present close parallels with II Isaiah, and therefore the composition as a whole, is post-exilic. At the same time the probabilities that a genuine Jeremianic nucleus is present are considerable. The parallelism with Jer. iii is striking, and in particular the invitation to Ephraim to return. The compiler, however, felt that the prominence of Northern Israel threw Judah into the background, and this largely accounts for the additions which he made. On the prophecy of the New Covenant the reader must refer to the special discussion of the passage; here the present writer must simply register his unshaken conviction that though in its present form we may owe it to Baruch, the prophecy itself comes from Jeremiah and from no other, and is the worthy crown of his teaching, as he has sought to show in the Introduction to this work (vol. i, pp. 43-48).

The date at which xxx, xxxi was compiled is a matter for conjecture. Duhm believes that it contains very late elements. A far more moderate position is taken by Schmidt, who says that it falls between the prophecies collected in Isa. xl-lv, and those found in Isa. lvi-lxvi. He thinks that it was written on the eve of Xerxes' expedition against Greece. 'The gathering of tremendous armies from all lands for a decisive combat may well have struck terror into the hearts of Judaeans' (*Enc. Bib.* 2391).

xxx. 1-3. Yahweh bade Jeremiah write all He had spoken to him in a book, in view of the restoration of Israel and Judah.

4-11. Why is this consternation? Why do men display such anguish? It is the Great Day, a day of trouble for Jacob, which shall issue in his deliverance. His yoke shall be broken, no more shall a book. For, lo, the days come, saith the LORD, that 3

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he serve strangers, but Yahweh and David their king. Fear not, Jacob, the servant of Yahweh, for thou shalt be restored and rest in thy land. I will utterly destroy the nations of thy dispersion, but thee I will only chastise.

12–17. Zion's hurt is incurable, she is forsaken by her lovers; Yahweh has inflicted her wound to punish her for her sins. All her enemies shall suffer retribution for the injuries they have done to her; but she shall be healed, outcast though she has been called.

18–22. Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, it will be filled with thanksgiving and merriment; its inhabitants will be multiplied, honoured, and protected. They shall be governed by a native ruler, whom I will cause to draw near to Me; they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

23, 24. Behold the storm of Yahweh's anger is about to burst on the wicked, nor will it cease till His purpose is fulfilled. The event will make plain the meaning of the threat.

xxxi. 1–6. Then I will be a God to all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people. Those who survived the sword have found favour in exile; I will go to restore Israel. From afar Yahweh assures Israel of His undying love. I will re-establish thee, O virgin of Israel; thou shalt join in the merry dance, and plant vineyards on the slopes of Samaria. They will go up from Ephraim to Yahweh in Zion.

7–14. Rejoice for the salvation of Israel; a great company from the north country and the ends of the earth is led back by Me, who am once more Israel's father and count Ephraim as My firstborn. Let the nations hear of Israel's restoration. They shall rejoice in Zion and feast on Yahweh's bounty; all their desire shall be satisfied. Mourning shall be turned into merriment, and all shall be abundantly content.

15–22. The voice of Rachel is heard lamenting for the children she has lost. Cease thy tears: thy children shall come back to thee. Ephraim repents his former waywardness, and pleads with Yahweh to restore him. I yearn over him, even when I rebuke him; I will have mercy upon him. Return, Israel, to thy cities. Why go hither and thither? Yahweh has created a new thing: a woman will be turned into a man.

23–26. Again in Judah will Yahweh's blessing be invoked on the Temple; its inhabitants shall be husbandmen and shepherds. He has satiated the weary. I woke to reality from my slumber, and realized that it was all a pleasant dream.

27–30. I will give Israel and Judah the seed of man and beast, and as I have cast them down, so I will build them up. No longer shall the children complain that they are punished for their fathers' sins, but each shall suffer for his own.

I will [a] turn again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the LORD: and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.

4 And these are the words that the LORD spake concern-

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[a] Or, *return to*

31–34. I will make a New Covenant with Israel and Judah, not like that which I made when I brought them out of Egypt, a covenant which they broke; but I will write My law in their hearts, I will be their God and they shall be My people. And none shall teach another the knowledge of Yahweh, for all shall know Me, and I will forgive and forget their sin.

35–37. If the laws which control the shining of the heavenly bodies are abolished, Israel also shall cease to be a nation before Me. If heaven can be measured and the foundations of the earth be searched out, I will cast off Israel for its sin.

38–40. Jerusalem shalt be rebuilt larger than before, and never again be destroyed.

xxx. 2. all the words. If this is taken strictly it would imply a direction to Jeremiah to compile a complete collection of his prophecies, and the revelation which as yet he had not given to the world. The question would then arise in what relation this stood to the collection of prophecies made in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (xxxvi. 2). The latter was not necessarily complete; it contained prophecies against Jerusalem (so LXX) and Judah and the nations, and these were prophecies of denunciation and judgement. But if in the present passage a complete collection is intended it would naturally include the collection already made, and the absence of any reference to that roll would be perplexing. But we should probably not press the phrase. From 3 we learn that the prophecies are to be collected in view of the return of Israel and Judah to Palestine, and from 4 that they are to be identified with what follows. We might then take 'all the words' to mean all contained in this section. But perhaps the meaning is that the prophecies previously published were of a threatening character and gave only a one-sided representation of his teaching: 'all the words' have not yet been written; only when the promises of the blessed future have been added will the collection be complete. It need hardly be added that 1–4 will not be earlier than the date at which xxx–xxxi was compiled.

3. turn again the captivity: see note on xxix. 14. The phrase occurs rather frequently in xxx–xxxiii.

4. The form of expression may be intended to suggest a con-

ing Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the 5
LORD: We have heard a voice of trembling, [a] of fear,
and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man 6
doth travail with child: wherefore do I see every man
with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and
all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is 7
great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of

---

[a] †Or, there is *fear, and no peace*

---

trast with the collection of words spoken concerning the foreign nations.

5. thus saith the LORD. If these words are to be retained, we should take the rest of the verse as a quotation by Yahweh of the people's words, inserting 'Ye say' in the translation (so Driver), since it is inappropriate to represent Yahweh as saying 'We have heard.' But the words are apparently a thoughtless, and rather too characteristic, addition by some scribe. It is the people who are speaking. The Day of Yahweh has come; men cry out in the panic which has overtaken them.

6. The posture and the paleness would in a woman suggest the throes of childbirth; if men exhibit the same symptoms it is a sign of a bitter, if a different, anguish. Cf. Isa. xiii. 8, Nah. ii. 10, Joel ii. 6. The superfluous clause 'as a woman in travail' is best omitted, with the LXX.

7. that day: i. e. the Day of Yahweh. This was originally, as we may infer from Amos v. 18, an element in the popular theology of Israel, expressing the expectation of a great intervention on the part of Yahweh, when He would crush all her foes and place her in a position of unchallenged supremacy. Amos warned the people that it would be a day of disaster and judgement, not of triumph, and his transformation of the idea was accepted by his true successors, many of whom give lurid descriptions of it, the most elaborate being that of Zephaniah. The *Dies Irae* is its counterpart in mediaeval Christianity. In the later Hebrew prophecy, however, the idea of the Day as issuing in Israel's salvation came back, conformably to the rule that prophecy before the destruction of the State was predominantly prophecy of judgement, after it prophecy of restoration. But salvation is reached through tribulation, which in the later Jewish theology was referred to as 'the woes of the Messiah.' The most familiar example is to be found in the eschatological discourse in the Gospels (see Mark xiii. 7, 8, 17–20, 24).

so that none is like it. This is probably the meaning; it

8 Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bands; and strangers shall no more serve them-
9 selves of him: but they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.
10 Therefore fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the

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involves a slight change in the present pointing, which gives the sense 'whence is any like it?' See note on x. 6.

Jacob's trouble. Jacob is a favourite designation of the Israelitish people in II Isaiah, and some of the later writers.

8. The former part of the verse is largely taken from Isa. x. 27, with an addition from Jer. ii. 20. The harsh change from the third to the second person is probably due to the fact that the passage is a quotation, but whether the poet retained the second person of the quotation, or whether he conformed it to the context and wrote the third person (so LXX, except that it substitutes the plural for the singular), and our present Hebrew text originated from assimilation to Isa. x. 27 is uncertain. The present writer prefers the former view, since he considers it easier to believe that the LXX corrected the awkward Hebrew than that a scribe would create the incongruity under the influence of Isa. x. 27; all the more that the LXX itself is not quite satisfactory in that it reads the plural. The yoke is the heathen dominion. But while it is political servitude only, and not idolatry as well, which is intended, the combination Yahweh and David in the next verse suggests that behind the heathen empires stood the supernatural rulers, 'the host of the high ones on high' of Isa. xxiv. 21, the 'gods' of Ps. lviii. 1 (see margin), lxxxii. 1, 6, the 'princes' of the Book of Daniel. These are ultimately responsible for Israel's sufferings, since they are the supernatural powers, which really control the policy of the great empires.

serve themselves of him: i. e. employ him as their slave; see notes on xxv. 11, 14.

9. serve: here combines the religious with the political sense. David is the name for the ideal ruler of the Davidic line; cf. Hos. iii. 5, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, xxxvii. 24, 25. It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out that the final clause does not mean that the long-deceased king David will be raised from the dead to reign over Israel; the same verb is used in xxiii. 5, 'I will raise unto David a righteous shoot' (see note).

10, 11. The two verses recur with some variation in xlvi. 27, 28. The LXX inserts them there, but omits them here. It must

LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with 11
thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee with judgement, and will in no wise [a] leave thee unpunished.

For thus saith the LORD, Thy hurt is incurable, and 12

[a] Or, *hold thee guiltless*

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be remembered, however, that the prophecies on the foreign nations precede the present chapters in the LXX, so that the omission here may be simply an example of the suppression of passages of which a translation has already been given. Scholars take the most opposite views of the original position. Cornill thinks it stood originally in xlvi (a non-Jeremianic addition); Giesebrecht that it is an integral part of the present prophecy; Driver that it is a detached fragment, added in both places by a compiler; Orelli that it is from the hand of Jeremiah, and owes its position in both places to him. The strongly marked Deutero-Isaianic colouring of 10 forbids us to regard it as Jeremiah's, but it might quite well be an original element of the present non-Jeremianic passage.

10. Jacob my servant. This designation is found elsewhere in this book only in the parallel passage xlvi. 27, 28, but it is very common in the Second Isaiah, one of whose leading thoughts it is that Israel is the Servant of Yahweh. The form in which the sentence opens is similarly characteristic of II Isaiah, so too 'fear thou not' and 'I am with thee.'

from afar. Probably the dispersion is intended.

and none shall make him afraid. 'The expression is used of sheep lying undisturbed upon their pastures' (Driver).

11. We could hardly believe that Jeremiah uttered this prophecy of the annihilation of the nations. For 'I will not make a full end' cf. iv. 27, v. 10, 18.

I will correct thee with judgement: see note on x. 24.

12–17. Duhm considers that in 12–15 we have a genuine poem by Jeremiah (similarly Kent). It is Jeremianic in rhythm and imagery, but this may be due to imitation, as several scholars suppose. The language depicts Judah's condition after the judge-

13 thy wound grievous. There is none to plead [a] thy
cause, [b] that thou mayest be bound up: thou hast
14 no healing medicines. All thy lovers have forgotten
thee; they seek thee not: for I have wounded thee
with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of
a cruel one; for the [c] greatness of thine iniquity, be-
15 cause thy sins were increased. Why criest thou [d] for
thy hurt? thy pain is incurable: for the [c] greatness
of thine iniquity, because thy sins were increased, I have

[a] †Or, *thy cause: for* thy *wound thou hast no medicines* nor *plaister* [b] Heb. *for closing up*, or, *pressing*. [c] Or, *multitude* [d] †Or, *for thy hurt, because thy pain is incurable?*

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ment has been executed, but if Jeremiah's the passage is probably pre-exilic rather than composed just after the destruction of Jerusalem. It is perhaps on the whole more likely that it is the work of a later writer.

12. Cf. xv. 18, where Jeremiah uses with reference to himself language similar to that here used, as the feminine pronouns show, with reference to Zion. Her desperate state seems now to be of long standing.

13. The sudden transition from the medical to the judicial metaphor is very harsh, and the text is accordingly suspicious. The R.V. gives the sense according to the accents, but this involves a mixture of the metaphors. The R.V. marg. avoids this, but if the text is retained it would be better to render with Driver, 'There is none to plead thy cause: [there are no] medicines for the sore; there is no plaister for thee.' It would be better still, with Duhm, to omit the first clause, which is apparently a gloss. The word rendered 'wound' in the margin means something bound up rather than 'pressing' or 'binding up,' so that 'wound' is the correct translation. For the last clause of the verse cf. xlvi. 11.

14. thy lovers: Zion's old heathen allies; cf. iv. 30.

The latter part of the verse ('for . . . increased') recurs in 15. It is probable that the repetition is due to accident; the words come better in 15, and should be struck out here.

15. The rendering in the text suggests that it is useless for Zion to lament, since her pain is incurable. The margin is preferable, though 'that' would be better than 'because.' Why should Zion complain of her hurt, that no remedy can assuage her pain or heal her wound? The fault is all her own; the gravity of her punishment is due recompense for the gravity of her crime. Rothstein takes 15, 16 to be an expansion.

done these things unto thee. Therefore all they that 16
devour thee shall be devoured; and all thine adversaries,
every one of them, shall go into captivity; and they that
spoil thee shall be a spoil, and all that prey upon thee
will I give for a prey. For I will restore [a] health unto 17
thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD;

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[a] See ch. viii. 22.

16, 17. The connexion with the preceding is difficult, since the sinfulness of Zion is no reason for its restoration. It is questionable whether we can substitute 'nevertheless' for 'therefore,' and the thought, though Zion deserves all she has received I will nevertheless punish her oppressors, is not very attractive. Keeping the present text, it is best to take 'therefore' to mean 'because thy case is so desperate.' The words 'It is Zion' have by many been taken as a gloss, but it was too obvious that Zion was intended for the need of such a gloss to be felt. The LXX reads 'This is your quarry,' the Hebrew word for 'quarry' or 'spoil' being very similar to that for 'Zion.' If this is accepted we should probably correct 'your' into 'our,' the two being easily confused in Greek. Cornill, who proposes this emendation, then reverses the order of 16, 17. He thus gets rid of the difficulty caused by 'Therefore,' but instead of the equally unsuitable 'For' is forced to read 'I' (*anoki* instead of *ki*). He also prepares for 'they that devour thee' (Heb. 'eat thee') by the words of the enemy 'This is our quarry.' The reconstruction (which is accepted by Kent) gives a smooth and orderly text, but it is reached by rather drastic measures, and further involves the elimination of the words 'whom no man seeketh after,' which are unsuitable with 'This is our quarry.' It can hardly be accepted with any confidence.

16. devour. In ii. 3 the word is appropriate, because Israel has just been described as 'the first-fruits;' its use here, without any such explanation in the context, is not so easy to understand. If Cornill's transposition of 16 and 17 be rejected, we should probably see here a reminiscence of ii. 3: cf. x. 25.

shall go into captivity. The LXX reads 'shall eat their own flesh.' Cornill accepts this, referring to Isa. xlix. 26, 'And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh;' we might compare Isa. ix. 20. It is noteworthy that in the other clauses of the verse the verbs are repeated ('devour . . . devoured,' &c.), and we should have expected this clause to follow the same pattern.

17. restore health unto thee: rather 'bring up fresh flesh upon thee:' see note on viii. 22.

because they have called thee an outcast, *saying*, It is
18 Zion, whom no man [a] seeketh after. Thus saith the
LORD: Behold, I will [b] turn again the captivity of Jacob's
tents, and have compassion on his dwelling places; and
the city shall be builded upon her own [c] heap, and the
19 palace shall [d] remain after the manner thereof. And out
of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them
that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall
not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not
20 be small. Their children also shall be as aforetime, and
their congregation shall be established before me, and

[a] Or, *careth for* [b] Or, *return to* [c] Or, *mound* Heb. *tel.*
[d] Or, *be inhabited*

Zion. For the LXX reading 'quarry' see above. Modern suggestions are 'a monument,' 'a desert,' 'miserable.'

18. turn again the captivity: see xxix. 14.

the city. This may be collective, meaning the cities of Judah (and similarly 'the palaces'); if a particular city is meant it will be Jerusalem. It is to be rebuilt on its *tel* or mound, i.e. on its old site.

remain after the manner thereof. The verb means to dwell, and may be rendered as in the margin, or 'be situated.' If the former, the phrase means that the palace will be inhabited as it was wont to be. If the latter, we must take the word rendered 'manner' (literally 'right') to be equivalent to 'its rightful place,' which forms a better parallel to 'her mound' than the R.V., which would have been expressed more naturally in rather different Hebrew.

19. When Yahweh turns again the captivity of Zion, their mouth will be filled with thanksgiving and merriment (Ps. cxxvi. 1, 2); and they will not have to mourn over a land depleted of its population (contrast Isa. xxvi. 18, rendering 'been born' for 'fallen'). They will no longer be a despised people (Isa. liii. 2, 3), but honoured among the nations.

20. The people will be as in the time of the nation's greatness and prosperity under David and Solomon.

congregation: a characteristic term of the Priestly Document in the Pentateuch. Its use is not probable in a pre-exilic writer, who would have regarded Israel as a State rather than just an ecclesiastical community.

I will punish all that oppress them. And their prince 21
shall be of themselves, and their ruler shall proceed from
the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near,
and he shall approach unto me: for who is he that [a] hath
had boldness to approach unto me? saith the LORD.
And ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. 22
[b] Behold, the tempest of the LORD, *even his* fury, is 23
gone forth, a [c] sweeping tempest: it shall burst upon the

[a] Heb. *hath been surety for his heart.* [b] See ch. xxiii. 19, 20.
[c] Or, *gathering*

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21. They will be governed by a native ruler; the term 'king' is avoided. The contrast is with the government by foreign empires, Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Persia, possibly Greece. This ruler will stand in the most intimate relations with God, to whom indeed he will act as priest. Not, however, as earlier high-handed kings who took it on themselves to approach God. That no one would dare to do who truly understood what the approach of a sinful mortal to the holy God involved (Isa. vi. 5: cf. Luke v. 8). He will not take the dread function on himself (cf. Heb. v. 4), but God will graciously cause him to draw nigh. It is possible that priestly privilege and duty are not claimed here for the ruler, but the language has more point, if the prince is also the priest. It would be easiest to understand this ideal if the author was writing in the time of the Maccabean priest-kings, but it is not probable that the passage is so late.

22. Cf. xxiv. 7, xxxi. 33. This verse is absent from the LXX, and is probably an insertion, on account of the transition to the second person plural, and the anticipation of xxxi. 1.

23, 24. These verses occur, in a quite unsuitable context, in xxiii. 19, 20 (see notes on that passage). Here a prediction of judgement is more in keeping with the eschatological terror of the passage, and Duhm considers them to be in their original connexion. Others regard them as an insertion. 'The wicked,' according to the general use of the term, are not the heathen but ungodly Jews, and the verses mean that before the restoration (xxxi. 1) can take place, a sifting blast of judgement is to go through the people, destroying the wicked, and leaving only the righteous to form the new nation. But this thought is scarcely in harmony with the general drift of these chapters, so that the verses are probably an insertion.

sweeping. The sense of the Hebrew word is uncertain; if the text is correct, we may render 'sweeping' or 'roaring.' But

24 head of the wicked. The fierce anger of the LORD shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the intents of his heart: in the latter days ye shall understand it.

31 At that time, saith the LORD, will I be the God of all the
2 families of Israel, and they shall be my people. [J] Thus

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we should probably substitute the very similar word found in the parallel passage, 'whirling' (xxiii. 19).

xxxi. 1. This verse forms a link between the two chapters, and should therefore be assigned to the author who composed the two chapters, on the basis of Jeremianic material. In the bright future Yahweh will be the God of all the Hebrew tribes, not of one section alone. The disruption created by the folly of Rehoboam will be repaired.

2-6. This section is now generally regarded as containing a poem by Jeremiah on the restoration of the northern tribes. It probably belongs to his earliest period, like the similar utterance in the third chapter.

2. The verse is difficult. The R.V. text takes us back to the Exodus, when Yahweh intervened to save His people. This is strongly recommended by the reference to the wilderness, which reminds us of Jeremiah's description of the love between Yahweh and His people in the period of the wandering (ii. 2, 3, 7) which culminated in His gracious bestowal of the land of Canaan wherein she might 'rest' (ii. 7: cf. Exod. xxxiii. 14; Deut. iii. 20, xii. 9, 10; Joshua xxii. 4). The contrast of tenses here and in 4 ff. also favours this reference to the past. More probably, however, we should take the meaning to be that Israel in its captivity has found favour and will be restored. This is the main subject of the poem, and while it is not uncommon for the restoration to be compared with the deliverance from Egypt, we should expect the transition to be made plain. The tense is prophetic, and we should render 'hath found,' i.e. will find. The 'wilderness' must then be taken as a figurative expression for the land of exile, which while literally inappropriate, is chosen partly with a backward glance at the wilderness wandering, but chiefly under the influence of Hosea's words: 'Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak to her heart' (Hos. ii. 14). It must be admitted that such a use of the term without express indication that the usual sense is not intended is rather strange. Erbt deletes it, but it would be better to emend the text. Cornill suggests the word rendered 'dungeon' in Isa. xlii. 7 (*masgēr* for *midbār*), which is there used as a metaphor for captivity.

saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword
[a]found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, [b]when I
went to cause him to rest. The Lord appeared [c]of old 3
unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore [d]with lovingkindness have I drawn
thee. Again will I build thee, and thou shalt be built, O 4

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[a] Or, *have found . . . when I go* [b] †Or, *when he went to find him rest* [c] †Or, *from afar* [d] Or, *have I continued lovingkindness unto thee*

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left of the sword. This expression cannot easily be reconciled with a reference to the Exodus, but it accurately describes what happened in connexion with exile, since the captives were the survivors of a nation decimated by war or by executions.

Israel: i.e., as the sequel shows, the Northern Kingdom. Duhm connects the word, which is in the Hebrew the last word of 2, with 3, changing it into 'God will regard' (*yashur 'el*), which gives a parallelism with 'Yahweh appears.'

when I . . . rest. It would be better to make Israel the subject as in the margin, 'when he went to find him rest.'

3. Israel is the speaker, but it would be better to read, with the LXX, 'unto him.'

of old. The marginal rendering 'from afar' should have been adopted in the text here, as in xxx. 10, li. 50, 'remember Yahweh from afar,' and 'hath appeared' should be substituted for 'appeared.' Yahweh from His distant home in Palestine (li. 50) appears to His people, languishing in exile, as their deliverer. Rothstein reads 'He that hath compassion on him' (*m*^{e}*raḥămo*), and omits 'the Lord.'

with lovingkindness . . . thee. The margin gives the same sense to the verb as in Ps. xxxvi. 10 ('continue thy lovingkindness:' cf. Ps. cix. 12, R.V. marg.). The thought is quite appropriate; the unchanging God, in spite of all Israel's unfaithfulness and the severity with which He has treated her, still cherishes His ancient love. The rendering in the text should probably be preferred; the influence of Hosea on this congenial spirit was deep, and we should interpret this passage in the light of Hos. xi. 4, 'I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love.' It would be better to substitute 'I draw thee' for 'have I drawn thee.' His arms of love, which once clasped Ephraim, upheld and guided his first tottering steps (Hos. xi. 3), now reach out to draw him back from the 'far country' to his Father's house.

4. Once again Israel will be firmly established in her own land, and renew her ancient life of peaceful toil relieved by innocent virgin of Israel: again shalt thou be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that

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mirth and festivity. This idyllic picture deserves to be made prominent in any estimate of Jeremiah ; it is one of many indications that he was no sour and morose enemy of recreation and merriment. Cornill justly emphasizes the significance of the fact that he should mention first in his description of the consequences of the restoration, not lofty spiritual blessings, but tabrets and dances.

shalt thou . . . tabrets. Israel is here addressed under the figure of a maiden, who on a festal occasion decks herself with tabrets. It is the whole people which is thus to be as light-hearted and enter as fully into the merry-making as a young maiden would. No doubt the actual dancing and timbrel-playing on the part of the virgins would constitute one of the most characteristic forms of this festivity. Jeremiah, in spite of his exclusion from it had doubtless often felt the sympathetic thrill as he watched the happy scene. The word rendered 'tabret' is in several cases rendered 'timbrel.' It consisted of a wooden or metal ring, over which a skin was tightly stretched. It was a kind of hand-drum or tambourine, used specially by women, who held it in one hand and played on it with the fingers of the other. Miriam led the women with her timbrel, and they followed her with timbrels and dances, to celebrate the overthrow of Pharaoh's army (Exod. xv. 20 21); and Jephthah was welcomed by his ill-fated daughter, his only child, 'with timbrels and with dances,' when he returned from his victory over the Ammonites (Judges xi. 34).

the dances of them that make merry. These would be celebrated especially at the harvest and vintage, and the maidens were prominent in them, as we see from the story of the marriage by capture of the daughters of Shiloh (Judges xxi. 19–21: cf. ix. 27) Dancing has become so completely secularized, to say the least, in modern life that it requires an effort of imagination to realize to what extent it has been a religious exercise. It has been so practised in many ages and by many peoples. Among the Hebrews the most conspicuous example is that of David, who when the ark was brought into his city, 'danced before Yahweh with all his might (2 Sam. vi. 14), and met Michal's prudish censure of his indecorous enthusiasm with the reply, 'I will be yet more vile.' Such glowing religion the conventional are apt to despise, and a frigi morality has no insight to comprehend it. On the place of dancing in the religion of the post-exilic period the essay by Fran Delitzsch, 'Dancing and the Criticism of the Pentateuch in Relation to One Another' (*Iris*, pp. 189–204), will be found of interest.

make merry. Again shalt thou plant vineyards upon the 5
mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall

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5. This verse presupposes that the vineyards of Samaria had been destroyed. To replant them implies that the owners were confident in the security of their tenure. For while corn may be sown and reaped within a few months, several years have to pass before the vineyard (and still more the oliveyard) makes any return. No one would be willing to invest his labour and risk his money in planting vineyards, unless there was a reasonable prospect that no foe would be likely to ravage it. It does not necessarily mean that in war the vineyards would inevitably be destroyed by the invaders; unless hostilities were pushed to an extreme they and the oliveyards were usually spared. But their destruction was frequently effected in warfare. (See Ramsay, *Pauline and Other Studies*, pp. 232–41.) Hence the promise that every man should sit under his own vine and fig-tree, was tantamount to the assurance that the country would enjoy peace, and its inhabitants an undisturbed possession. 'The mountains of Samaria' (Amos iii. 9) are those of the kingdom generally, not simply of the capital, which of course had its fruitful vineyards (Isa. xxviii. 1). Vineyards were planted in terraces on the mountain slopes (cf. Isa. v. 1, 'my well-beloved had a vineyard in a very fruitful hill') for the sake of the sunny exposure, and because the soil was more favourable. In his essay 'The Bible and Wine' (*Iris*, pp. 171–85), Delitzsch says: 'The experiments of recent times confirm the fact, that while the sandy soil of the coast yields more, the chalky soil of the highlands yields better wine' (p. 174). The mention of Samaria attests the Jeremianic origin of the poem; a post-exilic writer would hardly have spoken thus of Jerusalem's hated rival.

the planters . . thereof. The text is uncertain, but the R.V. probably gives the general sense. The margin justifies the rendering 'enjoy' by its references. According to Lev. xix. 23–25 the fruit was treated as 'uncircumcised,' and therefore not to be eaten for the first three years. In the fourth year it was 'holy for giving praise unto Yahweh.' In the fifth year it could be eaten. It was, in other words, at first taboo, unfit for God, withheld from man. The ceremonial offering to Yahweh in the fourth year removed its 'uncircumcision,' and rendered it fit for profane or common use in the fifth year; just as the crops could not be eaten till the firstfruits had been offered. Instead of 'enjoy the LXX read 'praise.' The two verbs are almost identical in Hebrew. The problem raised by the variation is not quite simple, but since it is probable on metrical grounds that some words have fallen out, it seems best to conclude that the original text had

6 [a] enjoy *the fruit thereof.* For there shall be a day, that

[a] Heb. *profane*, or, *make common.* See Lev. xix. 23–25; Deut. xx. 6, xxviii. 30.

'and praise Yahweh' at the end of the verse, and that the Hebrew retained one of the two very similar verbs, the LXX the other. This was perhaps facilitated by the previous omission of one verb in the text from which both our texts are drawn, the word retained being diversely read.

6. This verse is closely connected with the preceding, and formally appears to be an integral part of the poem; Duhm and Giesebrecht regard it as such, but Cornill thinks it must be a later addition, and Kent apparently inclines to adopt his opinion. Cornill cannot harmonize the view, which seems to underlie the passage, that Yahweh dwells on Zion and is only there to be sought and found, with the teaching of a prophet who places religion wholly in the heart and reins of men, and says of the Temple that, unless the people mend their ways, it will share the fate of Shiloh. And while the ancient schism between north and south would doubtless give place to a complete reunion, it is precarious to regard this as essentially ecclesiastical. These objections are not without weight; in particular the suggestion that to find Yahweh the Ephraimites must go to Zion is not easy to reconcile with the detachment of religion from material conditions. Yet we should probably regard the verse as authentic. While religion was for the prophet a personal relation with a personal God, it is very hard to believe that he expected it to dispense with external expression; and if it became individual it did not cease to be communal. Christianity is also in its essence a delocalized, dematerialized religion; 'neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father,' an utterance more drastic than any from the lips of Jeremiah, more irreconcilable if taken literally with the recognition of any place of worship. It proclaims that God is Spirit, and demands a corresponding worship in spirit and truth. Yet for all its inwardness, it always seeks an outward expression; and though such expression has constantly withdrawn the vital force from the secret centre to the surface, that is the fatal exaggeration of an intrinsic quality. Similarly we may hold that while Jeremiah looked forward to a deep spiritual experience for each member of the reunited nation, which should make each independent of all his fellows for the personal knowledge of God and communion with Him, he also anticipated that this would not be buried in the individual heart, but would rather seek expression in congenial forms. Indeed, the community of experience would inevitably involve community of worship. But it may still be asked, Would Jeremiah have singled out Zion and spoken as i

the watchmen upon the hills of Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God.
[S] For thus saith the LORD, Sing with gladness for Jacob, 7
and shout [a] for the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise

[a] †Or, *at the head*

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there alone God and His people could meet? Would he not rather have said that they would go to their own local sanctuary for their service of thanksgiving? In a regenerated Israel the worship at the high places might be resumed, for the old abuses would have disappeared. And we may well believe that Jeremiah would have favoured this renewal. But this would not have met all the need he felt. If the feud between Judah and Ephraim had been healed, the new national consciousness demanded, in a people for whom the national and the religious were so closely united, a religious expression. The long-sundered tribes must express their spiritual as well as their political unity. And this would most naturally take the form of a religious reunion at Jerusalem, the capital of the undivided kingdom. Not that God dwelt only in Zion or could be found there alone. Those who spoke as in this verse could equally well have said, Let us go to the sanctuary of our own city to Yahweh our God. And it is a fine feature in the description that the Ephraimites should spontaneously resolve to celebrate their happy fortune in Jerusalem.

watchmen. The word is often explained as a designation of those who were set on the hills to watch for the appearance of the new moon. But the word seems to be used simply in the sense 'to guard,' so that the meaning is rather the keepers of the vineyards or orchards. This gives a good sense, but a slight correction (*bōts*^{e}*rim* for *nots*^{e}*rim*) would give the meaning 'grape gatherers,' which would suit the connexion even better.

7–14. These verses, with the possible exception of the last clause of 9, are probably to be assigned to the post-exilic author to whom we owe the composition of xxx, xxxi as a whole. The points of contact with the Second Isaiah are striking, and the deliverance is regarded as on the eve of accomplishment.

7. Sing . . . for Jacob. It is not clear to whom the command is addressed; the LXX reads 'the LORD saith to Jacob' (so Cornill). This may well be correct, though the Hebrew text is satisfactory enough.

for the chief of the nations. The margin is the more natural translation, but it is not free from objection, and we should probably accept with most recent scholars Duhm's emendation 'mountains' for 'nations' (*hārîm* for *gōyīm*), 'shout on the top of the mountains;' the phrase is an imitation of the Second Isaiah's 'let them shout

ye, and say, O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of
8 Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the north country,
and gather them from the uttermost parts of the earth,
and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with
child and her that travaileth with child together: a great

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from the top of the mountains' (Isa. xlii. 11), and was further occasioned by the mention of 'the mountains of Samaria' and 'the hills of Ephraim' in the preceding context.

O LORD, save thy people. We should read, with the LXX and Targum, 'The LORD has saved his people:' cf. Isa. xlviii. 20. There is no longer need to implore Yahweh to deliver them, the shout of joy implies that the deliverance is achieved; the Hebrew text has probably originated from the liturgical use of the word 'Hosanna' ('save now,' according to the usual interpretation, but see Cheyne's article 'Hosanna' in the *Enc. Bib.*).

8. I will bring: better 'I am bringing.' The Israelites return not simply from the north, but from the uttermost parts of the earth (for the combination cf. vi. 22); this suggests a much wider dispersion than in Jeremiah's time, but cf. Isa. xliii. 6.

the blind . . . together: The reference to the blind comes from Isa. xlii. 16, for that to the lame we may compare Isa. xxxv. 6. The latter passage occurs in a chapter which presents other parallels to our passage, but is itself a late imitative composition largely based on Isa. xl–lv. It is rather improbable that our author was acquainted with it. The latter part is suggested by Isa. xl. 11, but the application is different.

hither: i.e. to Palestine, in which the author was writing. Duhm points differently, reading the word for 'Behold' and connects it with the next verse, which thus opens as the present verse (so Rothstein).

9. They come with tears (l. 4) of penitence (as in the moving passage iii. 21, 'the weeping of the supplications of the children of Israel') and of joy. The LXX gives quite a different turn to the passage: 'They went forth with weeping, but with consolation will I bring them back,' i.e. they went into exile with sorrow, but I will bring them back with comfort. This yields an excellent sense, and may very well be correct. We have a similar contrast in Ps. cxxvi. 6, but Isa. liv. 7, 8 supplies a parallel to the sense of a more real if less formal kind. In any case it would be well to substitute 'consolations' for 'supplications.' The latter is not quite suitable to the situation, it has probably intruded into the passage under the influence of iii. 21, which, however, deals with the penitence that preceded the restoration (cf. also Zech. xii. 10). The LXX is supported by the great prominence given by the

company shall they return hither. They shall come with 9
weeping, and with supplications will I lead them: I will
[a] cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way
wherein they shall not stumble: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

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[a] †Or, *bring them unto*

Second Isaiah to the comforting of Israel, cf. Isa. xl. 1, 2 (which strikes the keynote of Isa. xl–lv), xliii. 1 ff., xliv. 21–23, xlix. 13, 14 ff., li. 3, 12, lii. 9, liv. 10.

lead them: rightly connected with the preceding words. Hitzig and Graf preferred to connect with what follows, 'They shall come with weeping and with supplications: I will lead them, I will cause them to walk;' for a similar combination cf. Ps. xliii. 3. For 'lead' cf. Isa. xl. 11, xlviii. 21, xlix. 10, lv. 12; Ps. xxiii. 2.

rivers of waters: cf. Isa. xli. 18, xliii. 19, 20, xlviii. 21, xlix. 10. The way across the desert was, according to the Second Isaiah, to be relieved of all its peril from thirst and its discomforts, so that Yahweh might lead His people back in security and joy. The author of this passage, like the author of Isa. xxxv, writing with reference to the return from the dispersion, takes up the Second Isaiah's language, though with a less restricted application. Yahweh brings His people to the rivers, as the shepherd his sheep, so that they are not tormented with thirst.

a straight way. A better rendering would be 'an even way.' All the roughness of the road is to be smoothed out of it, so that there is nothing against which the weary or the careless should stumble: cf. Isa. xl. 4 (marg.), xlii. 16, also xlv. 2 (with reference to Cyrus), Heb. xii. 13. The author of Isa. xxxv anticipates that a raised way will be specially constructed and reserved for the holy pilgrims to Zion, along which the unclean shall not be permitted to travel, and from which the godless ('fools shall not go to and fro on it') shall be excluded, while it will be too elevated for wild beasts to climb up to it.

for I am . . . firstborn: cf. 20, where also Ephraim is used of the northern tribes, Israel in the narrower sense of the term as contrasted with Judah. It is not uncommon for Yahweh to be represented as the Father of Israel in the wider sense, and Israel as Yahweh's son, sometimes His firstborn son (Exod. iv. 22, 'Israel is my son, my firstborn'), while in Ps. lxxxix. 27 Yahweh says with reference to the king, 'I also will make him my firstborn.' The thought that Ephraim as contrasted with Judah possesses the right of the firstborn is rare. We read in 1 Chron. v. 1–3 that while Reuben was the firstborn he forfeited his birthright, by his

10 Hear the word of the LORD, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off; and say, He that scattered Israel

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misconduct, to the sons of Joseph. In 2 Sam. xix. 43 the LXX represents the men of Israel (i.e. the ten tribes) as saying to the men of Judah 'I am older' (*literally* 'firstborn') 'than thou.' In Hos. xi. 1 Israel must apparently mean the people as a whole, since the reference is to the Exodus (unless Hosea believed that Judah was not in Egypt), but he continues in 3, 'Yet I taught Ephraim to go,' as if 'Israel' and 'Ephraim' could be used interchangeably. There is much force in Cornill's plea that a post-exilic writer would hardly have spoken of Ephraim in this way, and in his inference that this clause is the work of Jeremiah. He regards it as the continuation of 5 and as effecting the transition to 15 ff. With the deletion of 6 it is easier to retain the clause. If 6 is retained for Jeremiah, this clause obviously cannot follow upon it, and it is questionable if it follows appropriately on 5; apart from the difficulty of interpolating it between 5 and 6. Yet if it is from Jeremiah it cannot have originally belonged to a context so saturated with Deutero-Isaianic words and ideas. We may then either take it as post-exilic like the context in which it stands, in spite of the difficulty that a Palestinian Jew should accord the precedence to Ephraim, or regard it as the work of Jeremiah which is out of its original connexion. In the present writer's opinion it would stand at the close of 20 more fitly than anywhere else in the chapter.

10. The proclamation recalls Isa. xli. 1, xlii. 10, xlix. 1; moreover in each of these passages 'the isles' are mentioned, a very characteristic phrase of the Second Isaiah, used, with a somewhat indeterminate application, of the coastlands and islands of the Mediterranean, often with a suggestion of distance as here ('isles afar off'). The nations learn that it was Yahweh who had sent His people into exile. Ezekiel regards the glory of Yahweh as compromised not only by the sin of Israel, which stained His reputation among the heathen, but by the punishment, which after much forbearance He had inflicted on Israel, inasmuch as this exposed Him to the taunt of the heathen that He was powerless to defend His own people: cf. Isa. lii. 5. Hence it is a theological necessity for Ezekiel that Yahweh should make plain to the nations by the restoration of Israel that He had been responsible for its captivity, and had not yielded to external necessity. So the author of this passage proclaims to the nations that it was Yahweh, who had scattered His people, who would now bring them back from the dispersion.

declare. If the persons addressed in the two clauses are the same, the nations are first to hear the word, then declare it in will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. 11 For the LORD hath ransomed Jacob, and redeemed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. 12 And they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together unto the goodness of the LORD,

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the far lands. Perhaps, however, the author meant nothing so definite as this, his language being rhetorical rather than exact. The present writer suspects that the text originally ran, 'give ear, ye isles afar off.' Cf. Isa. xlix. 1, where the word rendered 'Listen' is that translated 'Hear' in our passage, and a synonym (though not the same as here proposed) occurs in the parallel line. In any case 'and say' should probably be struck out.

will gather . . . flock : based on Isa. xl. 11 ; cf. Jer. xxiii. 3, Ezek. xxxiv. 12 ff.

11. ransomed . . . redeemed. The former of these verbs is not used by Jeremiah with reference to the people, and once only besides (xv. 21) ; the latter is not used at all, occurring elsewhere in the book only in l. 34 : both are favourite expressions of the Psalmists, the latter of the Second Isaiah also.

stronger than he : cf. Ps. xxxv. 10, Isa. xlix. 24, 25.

12. When the people are thus settled in Palestine they come to Zion to celebrate their deliverance : cf. Isa. li. 11 (quoted in xxxv. 10). It is not clear, however, what is meant by the words 'shall flow together unto the goodness of the LORD.' They might be a description of a feast on Yahweh's bounty, the fruits of the earth, for which the tribes stream (li. 44, Isa. ii. 2, Mic. iv. 2) to Zion, like the feast upon the tithe, which Deuteronomy had transferred from the local sanctuaries to Jerusalem. This is what the parallelism suggests, but the alternative view that they stream from Zion after their thanksgiving to enjoy the bounty of Yahweh in their own home suits much better the enumeration which follows. If this is the thought, it must be owned that it is obscurely expressed. Duhm accordingly suggests that 'flow' is a variant of 'sing,' which he transfers from the former part of the line to take its place, 'and sing concerning the goodness of the LORD.' Cornill agrees that 'flow' is unsuitable, but he retains the present text, taking the word to mean here 'to beam.' It occurs in Ps. xxxiv. 5, 'They looked unto him, and were lightened,' and in Isa. lx. 5, where the A.V. rendered 'flow together' as here, but the R.V. has corrected it to 'be lightened.' This rendering would not be so suitable here ; 'shall be radiant over' would bring out the sense.

goodness : i. e. bounty ; the word has a material, not a spiritual reference.

to the corn, and to the wine, and to the oil, and to the
young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall
be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any
13 more at all. Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old together: for I will turn
their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make
14 them rejoice from their sorrow. And I will satiate the
soul of the priests with fatness, and my people shall be
satisfied with my goodness, saith the LORD.

15 [J] Thus saith the LORD: A voice is heard in Ramah,

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wine: i.e. 'must' or 'new wine,' see Driver's additional note on Joel i. 10 (*Joel and Amos*, pp. 79 ff.). The corn, wine, and oil are mentioned together in Hos. ii. 8, 22, and 'the increase of thy kine and the young of thy flock' are added in Deut. vii. 13, similarly Deut. xii. 17.

their soul . . . garden: cf. Isa. lviii. 11; 'watered' should rather be 'saturated.' The metaphor is far more expressive in the East, where drought is so common. For them the parched wilderness will rejoice and blossom as the rose; their life will be one of inward tranquillity and refreshment, of outward prosperity and peace; there will be no retrenchment of whatever is needed to bring the best fruit out of them, all their desire will be fulfilled. [The reference to this clause in vol. i, p. 55, is due to an oversight and should be deleted; the passage is probably not Jeremiah's.]

and they . . . at all: cf. Isa. li. 11. The word rendered 'sorrow' means 'to languish' or 'pine.' Cf. Deut. xxviii. 65.

13. The first clause of the verse draws upon 4, the second has a parallel in Zech. viii. 4, 5.

together: i.e. shall rejoice together, but we should probably read, with the LXX, 'shall be glad' instead of 'together;' the difference is merely one of pointing. In any case it is simply the virgin who is represented as dancing; it need hardly be said that the type of dancing familiar to modern readers is not intended.

14. The soul or appetite of the priests is satiated (literally 'saturated,' Isa. xliii. 24, Ps. xxxvi. 9) with fatness (Isa. lv. 2, 'le your soul delight itself in fatness'). When Yahweh's bounty ha satisfied the people with abundance of corn and wine and oil, o flocks and herds, then their thank-offerings would be proportion ately abundant, and the priest's portion would be very rich.

15–22. Here we meet once more with a genuine poem by Jere miah, in which the qualities of his genius as the poet of the hea are displayed in full measure. Its subject is the return lamentation, and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her

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Ephraim; like the earlier poems in this section, it seems to belong to the prophet's first period. Delitzsch considers it to be the prophecy mentioned in xl. 1 as given to Jeremiah after Nebuzaradan 'had let him go from Ramah,' but not actually recorded. His view is endorsed by Orelli. But the basis is altogether too slender, nothing can safely be built on the incongruity of xl. 1 with the sequel; and the reference to Ramah was probably not occasioned by Jeremiah's presence there after the capture of Jerusalem. If we could regard xxx–xxxi as a prophecy uttered by Jeremiah after the fall of Jerusalem, the occasion suggested by Delitzsch would be better worth consideration. But at this time the prophet's thoughts and emotions would be centred on the tragedy which was in progress rather than on the long-continued exile of the northern tribes.

15. Cf. iii. 21. Rachel is here represented as weeping for the children she has lost, the northern tribes who have gone into exile. It is no mere poetical figure as a modern reader would naturally regard it, but the tribal ancestress is stirred from her rest in the grave to wail for the sons of whom she has been bereaved. The shrill lamentation is heard beyond the limits of her tomb; and like her husband, when he believed that Joseph their son was dead (Gen. xxxvii. 35), she refused to be comforted (cf. Ps. lxxvii. 2). Probably some natural phenomenon had been interpreted, in harmony with popular ideas, of which Jeremiah makes such effective use, as the bitter weeping of Rachel for the fate of her children. The passage does not indeed mention Rachel's grave, and we might think of her as raising her keen on the heights of Ramah as she surveyed the desolated home of her descendants. But the other view is more probable. The grave of Rachel is in Gen. xxxv. 16–20, xlviii. 7, placed between Bethel and Ephrath, a little distance from the latter place. Ephrath is identified in these passages with Beth-lehem. This identification underlies the application of our passage to Herod's massacre of the children in Beth-lehem, in Matt. ii. 17, 18. But it can hardly be correct. The site of Rachel's grave is fixed by 1 Sam. x. 2 as 'in the border of Benjamin.' The border intended is that between Benjamin and Ephraim, near Bethel (1 Sam. x. 3), not that between Benjamin and Judah. Bethel was ten miles, Ramah five miles, north of Jerusalem; and these indications forbid an identification of the clan-mother's sepulchre with the traditional site, which is four miles south of Jerusalem and one mile north of Bethlehem. Nor would it be a natural situation, since Rachel had no connexion with Judah. It has been held by some eminent scholars, including Nöldeke and Dillmann, that there were two traditions touching the site. It is, however, more probable that

children; she refuseth to be comforted for her children,
16 because they are not. Thus saith the LORD: Refrain
thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for
thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they
17 shall come again from the land of the enemy. And there
is hope for thy latter end, saith the LORD; and *thy* chil-
18 dren shall come again to their own border. I have surely
heard Ephraim bemoaning himself *thus*, Thou hast chas
tised me, and I was chastised, as a calf unaccustomed *t*
the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thoı

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the words ‘that is Beth-lehem’ in Gen. xxxv. 15, xlviii. ’ are a gloss, occasioned by the fact that elsewhere Ephrath i identified with Beth-lehem. In that case the Ephrath mentione in these passages is a place otherwise unknown.

16. To the bitter weeping of Rachel for the loss of her children Yahweh replies in words of gracious comfort, as to the bitte weeping of her children on account of their sins, in iii. 21, 22 The mother is assured that her work will be rewarded. She ha toiled for her children, borne them in sorrow and reared them wit untiring labour; but her pains have been vainly spent, for all sh has lavished she has had no return. A century ago the death-wa had proclaimed the blighting of all her hopes, and still the soun of her lamentation is to be heard in Ramah. And now Yahwe bids her cease from her sorrow; there will be a reward for he labour, the children of whom she thought herself irretrievabl bereaved will come back once more, to brighten the eyes so lon dimmed by tears.

17. This is regarded by several scholars as a variant of 16^{b}, bı opinion is divided on the question which is the original. The fa that the LXX gives a much shorter text in 17 may be variousl interpreted, and it would be precarious to infer on this ground th 17 is a later addition. It is by no means certain that we hav variants before us, but if so, it would be better to sacrifice 17 tha the more distinctive and powerful 16^{b}.

18. While the mother weeps for her bereavement, the childre bemoan themselves for their sin. Ephraim confesses that h chastisement had been deserved. He had acted like a calf whi had not been broken in, undisciplined and self-willed. He h found it hard to kick against the goad, and punishment has taug him the wisdom and blessedness of obedience.

turn . . . be turned. This rendering suggests that ‘turn’ used in its spiritual sense. It would be better to substitute ‘I w art the LORD my God. Surely after that I was turned, 19

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turn' for 'I shall be turned,' since to the modern reader the latter rendering implies that the verb is passive, whereas in older English it was used in a neuter sense (see Driver, p. 366). The meaning is then that if Yahweh will take the initiative in turning the heart of Ephraim towards Him, Ephraim will on his part accept the Divine leading and turn to his God with all his heart. In itself this gives an admirable sense, for in all conversion there is the Divine initiative met by the human response. But we seem to have passed beyond this stage here; Ephraim has already experienced the Divine attraction and responded to it. Accordingly it is better to translate 'bring me back, and I will return,' i.e. bring me back to my own land (cf. iv. 1).

19. Surely . . . repented: a difficult clause. If the sense of 18 is correctly given in R.V., the obvious meaning of this clause is that Ephraim's repentance followed his return to God. It is no doubt true that as the religious life deepens, repentance for the sinful past also grows deeper, since with widening and purer vision the sense of the guilt and heinousness of sin increases. But it would be inappropriate to import such a consideration here. The repentance is the first sorrow for sin which precedes the return to God. Obviously the meaning cannot be either that Ephraim repents after his restoration to Palestine. Accordingly the text can only be rendered, as several scholars take it, 'after I turned [from thee] I repented.' This implies a double sense of the word 'turn' in the same context. For this viii. 4, iii. 12, 14, 22 are quoted. In each of these cases, however, the sense could hardly be misunderstood, whereas here 'after I turned' takes up 'I will turn' in the preceding verse, and irresistibly suggests the same sense. Accordingly the text is suspicious. The LXX reads 'after my captivity,' which involves little change in the Hebrew. The sense is more satisfactory than the expression; Duhm accepts the reading, but regards it as a marginal gloss, and changes 'instructed' into 'chastised,' reading 'Surely I repented after I was chastised, I smote upon my thigh.' This gives a smoother text, but the reason for the insertion of such a gloss is far from clear. Giesebrecht prefers the Hebrew to the LXX and retains 'instructed,' but agrees with Duhm in striking out the words in question as a gloss. Cornill retains the words with a slight correction, and connects with the closing words of 18, but he expunges 'after that I was instructed,' which he regards as philologically dubious. He renders 'For thou art Yahweh my God, and to thee do I turn. I repent and smite,' &c. He thus gets rid of what he feels to be the main objection, the repetition of 'for' (disguised in R.V. by the rendering of the second by 'Surely') which gives two reasons for 'I will turn.'

I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote
upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded,
20 because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Is Ephraim
my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for as often as
I speak against him, I do earnestly remember him still:
therefore my bowels [a] are troubled for him; I will surely
have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.

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[a] Heb. *sound*

smote upon my thigh. This gesture was a sign of the uttermost grief, as we learn from Ezek. xxi. 12. Our equivalent, as Cornill says, would be 'I smote upon my breast.'

the reproach of my youth. According to usage this should mean that Ephraim's youth was an occasion of reproach. But in this context it must mean the reproach for the sins of his youth. Duhm reads simply 'I did bear reproach,' i.e. of exile; he thinks that 'of my youth' is the corruption of a gloss meaning 'on account of my guilt.' Cornill deletes the whole clause.

20. In this beautiful soliloquy of Yahweh, the prophet does not shrink from the boldest anthropomorphism. Whenever the name of Ephraim passes His lips the tender memory revives in His heart. True, it is with horror and with threatening that He must speak of his conduct, yet the mention of his name even in anger revives all the ancient love. Moved to amazement by the paradox of His conflicting emotions, He asks Himself the reason. Is i because Ephraim is His darling child that, in spite of all his ingratitude and disobedience, the old affection surges up irrepressibl at every mention of his name?

speak against him: better 'speak of him.' The rendering i the text is adopted by several scholars, but although the speakin was normally of this character, the translation 'against' undul narrows the thought. It is not simply the formal denunciatio that is intended; the most casual utterance of the name brings al the happy memories back. Giesebrecht reads 'am angry wit him,' but the present text gives a wholly satisfying sense.

earnestly remember. The meaning is not that whenever th name of Ephraim is uttered, Yahweh remembers him for goo and resolves on his restoration, but that the old happiness of thei relations forces itself on His attention.

therefore . . . upon him. Since Yahweh has not been abl to dislodge the love for Ephraim from His heart, or consign th ancient relationship to oblivion, the affection which yearns ov His prodigal son must be satisfied by his restoration to His favou

Set thee up waymarks, make thee guide-posts: set 21
thine heart toward the high way, even the way by which
thou wentest: turn again, O virgin of Israel, turn again
to these thy cities. How long wilt thou go hither and 22
thither, O thou backsliding daughter? for the Lord hath

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21. Set thee . . . guide-posts. The injunction is strange. As Cheyne says: 'Surely the setting up of guide-posts belongs not to the travellers, but to friendly persons who prepare the way for them' (*Critica Biblica*, p. 70). The word rendered 'guide-posts' occurs here only, if the reading is correct, since elsewhere the same form means 'bitterness' (as in 15, 'weeping of bitterness'), and that is unsuitable here. The sense required by the parallelism is 'sign-posts,' and we may either assign this meaning to it, or, following the LXX, which seems to give a transliteration rather than a translation, read *timmorim*. This word means 'palm-trees,' but since a cognate word is used in x. 5 in the sense 'pillar' (so R.V. marg., see note), a similar sense is assumed here. The erection of waymarks is often interpreted as designed to save stragglers, who may have strayed from the main body, from getting lost. Duhm thinks Israel is bidden set up the waymarks in spirit; remembering the path by which she had come into exile, she should in thought erect the sign-posts to guide her return. But this, though favoured by the following clause, is rather artificial, and the more usual interpretation is precarious. For 'waymarks' Rothstein (in Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica*) prefers 'watchmen' (*tsōphīm*), and is very dubious about the suggested emendation of the parallel term, though he accepts it in Kautzsch's translation. It is perhaps best to acquiesce in the usual view as to the general drift of the passage without placing any undue confidence in the correctness of the text.

set thine heart . . . wentest. Let Israel turn her thoughts again to the road, by which she had travelled the bitter road to exile; now she may think on it with delight, for it is the way which will lead her home.

these thy cities. The writer is obviously in Palestine.

22. To the exhortation in the preceding verse, the prophet adds what is at once remonstrance and appeal. How long will Israel hesitate to believe and act upon the gracious promise? She flutters hither and thither in her indecision, let her strike out a clear undistracted course! In such a passage the epithet 'backsliding' strikes a jarring note. The LXX reads 'dishonoured;' the best correction is Cornill's 'despoiled' (*hashshedūdah*) which involves the change of two consonants.

for the LORD . . . a man. This passage is very difficult and created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall encompass a man.

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has occasioned much discussion. It must describe something wholly out of the ordinary course, something unprecedented in nature or human experience (cf. Isa. xliii. 19, Num. xvi. 30). If the expression is borrowed from a popular proverb, as is commonly supposed, the point will be that Yahweh will bring the proverbially impossible to pass. Many think the meaning is 'A woman shall protect a man,' and this is itself variously explained: Israel shall protect Yahweh, i. e. His Temple in which He dwells; or the Messiah is protected by his mother; or less obviously unlikely, the land will be so peaceful that the woman will no longer need protection from the man, but will be able to accord it to him, but in such happy conditions what protection does the man need? Others take the clause to mean that the woman will cling about the man; Israel will no longer hold Yahweh at a distance, but seek Him and cleave to Him. The new thing is that the woman woos the man, inverting the normal relationship. But this does not well harmonize with the fact that it is Yahweh who takes the initiative and creates a new thing. Nor does this any more than the previous rendering justify the description with which the clause is introduced. Such an unparalleled event as this demands seems to be expressed by Ewald's translation, 'A woman shall be turned into a man.' This is somewhat precarious as a rendering of the present text, but Duhm by a trifling emendation has removed this objection. He takes it, however, as a witty gloss by a reader, who on account of the language is to be assigned to the post-exilic period. The point of the annotation is, he thinks, that Israel, which had been spoken of earlier in the passage as a male, is now represented as a female. But, as Cornill points out, this would be more than a trivial witticism; introduced with the statement that Yahweh was creating a new thing, it would be a piece of blasphemy. Besides, such changes of representation are too common in Hebrew poetry for such a gloss to have any point. If this translation is right, the point must be that Israel, the weak, timid, irresolute woman (of course it is an Oriental who is writing), will be turned into a strong brave man. If the Hebrew text is retained in its present or in Duhm's slightly emended form, this seems to be the best interpretation. Only it may be questioned whether it is really satisfactory. For while the fulfilment of the promise, taken in its literal sense, would be unprecedented indeed, this would not be so in the metaphorical sense here intended. Accordingly a question arises as to the correctness of the text. The LXX reads 'men shall go about in safety,' but so tame a promise is not so

[S] Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Yet 23
again shall they use this speech in the land of Judah and
in the cities thereof, when I shall [a] bring again their captivity: The LORD bless thee, O habitation of justice, O
mountain of holiness. And Judah and all the cities 24

[a] Or, *return to*

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good as the Hebrew, nor is the emendation of the Hebrew based upon it by Schmidt (*Enc. Bib.* 2384) acceptable. Something of a more portentous character would be expected. In the parallel passage which speaks of Yahweh as doing a new thing (Isa. xliii. 19), it is the transformation of nature involved in making 'a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.' The most satisfying sense, as Cheyne has seen (*Critica Biblica*, pp. 70, 71), would be yielded by a text which similarly assured the captives that Yahweh would miraculously remove the physical obstacles to their return. His emendation, however, 'the Negeb shall change as (into) the Arabah' (cf. Zech. xiv. 10), while closer to the traditional text than many of his conjectures, is nevertheless a good deal removed from it, and depends on his North Arabian theory. The present writer has no suggestion to make which he can regard as satisfactory, and must content himself with pointing out the difficulties which attach to other solutions.

23–26. To the prediction of Ephraim's restoration a prediction of Judah's similar restoration is appended. Probably this is not the work of Jeremiah, but belongs to the author of xxx, xxxi. It apparently presupposes the downfall of the Southern Kingdom; the reference to Jerusalem as the 'mountain of holiness' is not what we expect from Jeremiah, though the prophet does not describe it thus himself, but simply says that others will so designate it; and the points of contact with 12–14 suggest that the same view should be taken of both passages.

23. Yet again: implying that at the time this was written such speech could not be used, since the land was a desolation and the Temple a ruin.

bring again their captivity: see note on xxix. 14.

habitation of justice: the land of Judah or the capital is an abode in which righteousness dwells. 'Habitation' is literally 'homestead.'

mountain of holiness. The holy mountain may be either the mountain land of Judah, or Jerusalem, or simply the Temple hill. The last is perhaps the most probable. For the whole verse cf. Zech. viii. 3.

24. The inhabitants of Judah will be able to practise the agricultural and pastoral life without any fear of the spoiler.

thereof shall dwell therein together; the husbandmen,
25 and they that go about with flocks. For I have satiated
the weary soul, and every sorrowful soul have I replen-
26 ished. Upon this I awaked, and beheld; and my sleep
27 was sweet unto me. Behold, the days come, saith the

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25. In this lovely verse the promises of 12 and 14 are recalled. The weary soul is refreshed, the pining (see note on 12) soul replenished.

26. This is a difficult verse. The views, which have found favour with many commentators, that either God or the people is represented as speaking seem to be universally abandoned. The author of the verse is referring to himself. Often the verse has been explained that when the prophet awoke from the sleep in which the foregoing revelation had been communicated to him, his dream seemed sweet to him as he looked back upon it. Such a statement could not well have come from Jeremiah, who did not recognize that God revealed Himself in dreams. But the words 'and beheld' are not easy to harmonize with this interpretation. The 'sleep' or prophetic ecstasy is the condition to which vision in the fuller sense belongs, but here the prophet speaks as if with his awakening true vision returned. We can hardly escape the conclusion then that the writer is contrasting the dream with the stern realities of actual life. He means that when he returns to the hard facts, when the glow dies down and, as we put it, reason resumes its sway, the gorgeous fancies of the night pale in the cold light of day. Plainly it is not the prophet himself who utters this confession of disillusion. It is one of his readers, who, not necessarily in a mocking mood as Duhm believes, but rather with the deep yearning that would fain hope against hope, confesses how attractive the prospect is, but how unlikely of realization. Cornill thinks that the verse stood originally after 22, and tha 'the isolated couplet' 25 should be struck out. Our verse woul then refer to the prophecy of Ephraim's return in 1-22. He i inclined to think that its present position is due not to its origina connexion with 23 ff., which would have been too slight for suc a conclusion, but to the interpretation of these verses as standin in close connexion with 22 and the words of blessing on Jerusale in 23 as spoken by the returned Ephraimites. A reader who wa familiar with the hatred of Jew and Samaritan in the later perio might well regard such anticipations of friendly relations a altogether too good to be true.

27-30. This passage raises critical difficulties. It falls int two parts (a) 27, 28, (b) 29, 30. The former may conceivabl come from Jeremiah, though its connexion with 24 does not favou

LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast.
And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched 28

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this, and it is written rather from the standpoint of the author of xxx, xxxi, dwelling on the union of Israel and Judah. The latter it is not easy to connect with Jeremiah. It is true that the proverb quoted was current among the people at this time, since the use of it is attacked by Ezekiel (xviii. 2, 3). But Ezekiel repudiates it as intrinsically false, and devotes a lengthy refutation to it; the writer of our passage seems to regard it as justifiable under the present conditions, but as inapplicable and uncalled for in the bright future to which he looks forward. Such a judgement we cannot easily reconcile with what we know of Jeremiah, a man who would have seen as clearly and felt as strongly as Ezekiel the essential injustice of a moral government which could be justly described in such a proverb.

27. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD. This formula, which we have met with previously in this section (xxx. 3), occurs with unusual frequency in this context (27, 31, 38). In three of these passages it introduces what is probably a non-Jeremianic oracle. But we ought not to permit this to prejudice us against the Jeremianic origin of the prophecy of the New Covenant.

I will sow . . . beast. The land of Palestine is at present thinly peopled. But Yahweh will break up His fallow ground and plant it with seed of man and beast, so that both may abound. The metaphor recalls Ezek. xxxvi. 9–11, Hos. ii. 23, though the point in the latter passage is different. Long after the return from captivity the complaint was made of the sparse population of the country, as we learn from the very striking passage Isa. xxvi. 16–19, which probably belongs to the latter part of the fourth century B. C. In that passage the repeopling of the depleted land is anticipated through a resurrection of pious Israelites. On those bodies buried in the earth the life-giving dew of God will descend, and they will come forth from the ground as the buried seed awakens to life and comes forth under the same quickening influence. Thus the old promises of innumerable posterity made to the patriarchs and repeated in Hos. i. 10, Ezek. xxxvi. 9–11 will be fulfilled.

the house of Israel and the house of Judah. The LXX reads simply 'Israel and Judah.' The point of the passage is that Israel and Judah, whose future blessedness has been separately described in the previous part of the prophecy, are now united: cf. iii. 18, l. 4; Isa. xi. 11–14; Ezek. xxxvii. 15–24; Hos. i. 11.

28. This verse is obviously intended to recall the terms of

over them to pluck up and to break down, and to overthrow and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over
29 them to build and to plant, saith the LORD. In those

Jeremiah's commission (i. 10) and his vision of the almond tree (i. 11, 12).

29. The popular proverb here quoted was current in the dark days of Judah's tragedy, as we learn from Ezek. xviii. 2, and the sentiment to which it gives such pungent expression is found in Lam. v. 7. It represents an antagonism to the ancient doctrine of solidarity, which had long been unchallenged in theory and carried out in practice. This doctrine had affirmed the mutual responsibility of the members of the group which formed its social unit. The individual had but little independent significance. If a man killed one who belonged to another clan, the individual aspect of the case was unimportant in comparison with the collective. The vital fact was that one clan had shed the blood of another clan, and the vengeance was directed not so much at the actual offender as at his clan as a whole. If a man broke the law or violated some taboo, then it was considered quite just that his family should suffer with him in expiation of his transgression. Achan's sons and daughters, and even his possessions, were stoned and burned along with the culprit himself (Joshua vii. 24, 25). The whole city of Nob was smitten with the edge of the sword, 'men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen and asses,' because Ahimelech the priest had helped David (1 Sam. xxii. 16–19). Saul's own children and grandchildren were hanged up before Yahweh to remove a famine caused by Saul's slaughter of the Gibeonites in violation of Joshua's oath (2 Sam. xxi. 1–9). With the development of the social and political organization and the break-up o the older clan system, the cruel injustice of such treatment was more and more recognized. A noteworthy advance was made when Amaziah slew the conspirators who had slain his father, bu spared their children (2 Kings xiv. 5, 6). The Deuteronomi Code explicitly enjoined that the fathers should not be put to deat for the children or the children for the fathers, but every man fo his own sin (Deut. xxiv. 16). And if conscience revolted in th sphere of the relations between man and man, it was natural tha it should do so in that of the relations between man and God. I had seemed to an earlier age quite unexceptionable that God shoul visit the sins of the fathers on the children to the third and fourt generation. And still with bitter indignation it was urged that s in fact He acted. The very form in which the protest was expressed, reveals how deep the people felt the injustice to b Their ancestors had sinned, no doubt, but what had their transgression been? It was as if a man had eaten sour grapes. In th days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But 30 every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

[J] Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will 31

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course of nature the effect of this would not simply be confined to the man himself, but it would be of the most transient character, and would leave no permanent mark behind it. Such had been the intrinsic quality of the fathers' sin as their children judged it. But in the moral government of God how unnatural had His treatment of the transgression been! The penalty had been transferred from ancestors to descendants, from the guilty to the innocent. And it was a penalty for a transgression of so trivial a character, which had properly no serious consequences and did no permanent moral damage. Thus they criticized God for undue interference with the chain of cause and effect; He had diverted the punishment from the guilty to the innocent, and He had treated the offence as far more grave than it was in reality. This criticism Ezekiel set himself to meet. He does not attempt to vindicate the truth of the traditional view, he affirms in the most uncompromising form the doctrine of individual responsibility. 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die,' it and no other. While he fully agrees that merit and guilt, reward and punishment, should not be transferable, he repudiates the charge that the ways of Yahweh had been unequal. The proverb was false in point of fact; his own generation was not suffering from the entail of ancestral guilt, but reaping the harvest of its own transgression; moreover it rested on an estimate of sin which was altogether too light-hearted. The extreme form in which Ezekiel stated his position needed modification: there was a real problem, which in his zeal for God's honour he refused to see. It is noteworthy that the present passage differs from Ezekiel's discussion, in that it seems to recognize that the proverb has had and still has its justification, but that in the happy future retribution will follow the lines of strict justice.

set on edge: literally **blunted**.

30. his own iniquity. In this period there may still be sin of such a character as to merit death.

31–34. We now reach the great prophecy of the New Covenant. Its Jeremianic origin was questioned by Movers, who attributed it to the Second Isaiah. As already mentioned (p. 68), Stade was the first to reject the authenticity of xxx, xxxi, including this prophecy, but without assigning reasons; while Smend, who did assign reasons for the rejection of the whole, did not go into the question of this passage at any length, and so far as he did make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with

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so was answered by Giesebrecht in the first edition of his commentary. In his article 'Covenant' in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, Schmidt relegated the whole section to the period of the Graeco-Persian War, but neither in this article nor in those on 'Jeremiah' did he give any adequate proof of this position, but contented himself with a reference to Smend's discussion. A very searching investigation was devoted to the question by Duhm. He was driven from the acceptance of the authenticity only with great reluctance. Not unnaturally the surrender of it involved a much lower estimate of its value. The same phrases bear different meanings on different lips. What a later scribe, zealous for the Law, intended by this oracle seemed to him something far inferior to what Jeremiah would have meant by it; the criticism thus controls to some extent the exegesis, and the result is to belittle the passage. Instead of the splendid climax of Jeremiah's teaching, epoch-making as scarcely any other pre-Christian conception, we had the dwarfed ideal of a post-exilic legalist, devoid alike of originality and historical significance. It is among the chief merits of Cornill's commentary that it contains a brilliant refutation of Duhm's arguments, which it is to be hoped may prove a final vindication of the authenticity. No student of Jeremiah to whom it is accessible should fail to read this masterly argument. An article by Prof. W. J. Moulton in the *Expositor* for April, 1906, should also be mentioned. Marti firmly maintains the Jeremianic origin in the last edition (1907) of his *History of the Religion of Israel.* Prof. Cheyne has now definitely assigned the passage to a supplementer (*The Two Religions of Israel*, pp. 60, 61). Duhm says that if genuine the passage would be very important, since it would express the antithesis between the prophetic and Deuteronomic conception of religion. But this passage does not, he proceeds, contain such a contrast; it promises a new 'covenant' but not a new 'law,' only an inward conformity of the people with the Law; and it puts the stress on the good results which this will have for the people, but betrays no need for a higher kind of religion. If one is not dazzled by the expressions 'new covenant,' 'write on the heart,' the passage says no more about the individual than what Deuteronomy already regarded as possible (xxx. 11 ff.) and desirable (vi. 6-8), that each should be familiar with the Law and loyally obey it. A still greater objection is the bad, cumbersome, slipshod style, the prominence of such phraseology as is dear to the supplementers, the complete absence of original figures of speech, which are to be found even in the shortest poems of Jeremiah. The other criticisms made by Duhm are best discussed as they arise in the detailed interpretation of the passage, the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that 32

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but it is desirable to examine at this point those which have just been mentioned.

The present writer has argued (vol. i, pp. 12–14) that the opposition to Deuteronomy felt by Jeremiah was by no means so fundamental as several scholars, including both Duhm and Cornill, have asserted. But leaving this question aside, the Old Covenant was for Jeremiah that made by God with Israel at Sinai. And this, as Cornill has shown, had for its content and basis the Decalogue. This is clear from the description given in Jer. vii. The same is true of the present passage, where there is a clear contrast between the law written with God's finger on the tables of stone and the law written by God in the heart. Deuteronomy accordingly does not come into consideration at all; and the need for a new law to supersede the Decalogue would not have been felt by Jeremiah. The New Covenant is new not in the sense that it introduces a new moral and religious code, but that it confers a new and inward power of fulfilling the code already given. The Law ceases to be a standard external to the individual, it has become an integral part of his personality. The second objection is not without force. But the oracle may have been touched by supplementers, as so much of Jeremiah's prophecies, and the form in which it was first written down may have been due to Baruch. Even so not the substance alone, which is the vital matter, but also the form is largely Jeremianic. The vagueness, of which Duhm complains, disappears when the passage is taken out of its isolation and set in its context in Jeremiah's teaching as a whole. The charge that it is lacking in original poetic images is not weighty, unless we unjustifiably restrict Jeremiah's authentic utterances to the compass assigned them by Duhm; and for daring originality the thoughts of the passage are not surpassed even by any utterance of Jeremiah himself.

We may pass then from these general considerations to the detailed study of the passage, feeling that so far nothing has been urged against its authenticity that need shake our confidence in it. The thought of the passage has been expounded and its significance set forth in the Introduction to this commentary (vol. i, pp. 43–48), and the writer would be glad if the student would read the notes which follow in connexion with that more general discussion (see also his notes on Heb. viii. 8–13).

31. a new covenant. On the Hebrew idea of 'covenant' the Bible Dictionaries and histories of the religion of Israel may be consulted. The term means generally a compact or agreement made between two parties, though in some cases it is simply imposed by one on the other, or may be a promise to which conditions are not attached. In antiquity the religion of a people

I made with their fathers in the day that **I** took them by

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was something that had grown with its growth, it had come down from immemorial antiquity. The relation between a clan and its deity was a natural and inevitable relation. The religion of Israel constituted an exception to this, in that it was a covenant religion. In other words, the relation between Yahweh and Israel was neither inevitable nor compulsory. Yahweh, free to choose any nation, chose Israel to be His people, and Israel took Yahweh to be its God, promising obedience to His commands. This covenant was ratified at Sinai. But Israel's inveterate disobedience had released Yahweh from His obligation. Hence the old Sinaitic covenant was annulled by the dissolution of Israel's national existence. But while the Old Covenant was thus abolished, the ties which bound Yahweh to His people could not be so readily snapped. Hence a New Covenant will replace the old, but a covenant which will provide against the failure that had overtaken its predecessor, and infallibly ensure its own permanent validity. The expression 'to make a covenant' is properly 'to cut a covenant,' perhaps derived from the custom mentioned in xxxiv. 18 (see note).

with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. In view of 33, where 'the house of Israel' alone is mentioned, it is probable that we should regard 'and . . . Judah' as an insertion. Jeremiah meant by 'Israel' the whole people including Judah. The author of these chapters, taking 'Israel' to mean the northern tribes, adds the reference to Judah, in conformity with his desire to emphasize the restoration not of these only but also of Judah. The omission of the words also restores the Qina rhythm. It is with the nation, not with the individual, that the New Covenant is made.

32. The prophet proceeds to define the New Covenant, first negatively in this verse, and then positively in 33, 34. It is not to be like the covenant made at the Exodus, the Sinaitic covenant. In what respect it was different has been already explained (p. 103). The verse is cumbrously expressed, but it would impoverish the passage to strike it out. The contrast with the Old Covenant needed to be brought out and its failure explicitly mentioned, in order to justify the making of a New Covenant. Cornill lightens the style and restores a regular Qina measure by omitting 'to bring them out of the land of Egypt' and 'saith the LORD.' Giesebrecht omits the latter, but in the former case strikes out simply 'the land of,' though he inserts 'aforetime' after 'I made.' This, while less satisfactory in form, is better in substance. Cornill thinks that the definite mention of the Exodus was unnecessary, since it was quite clear what was intended. But there was a possibility of misunderstanding, which is precluded by this clause.

the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; [a] which my covenant they brake, although I was [b] an husband unto them, saith the LORD. But this is the covenant 33

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[a] Or, *forasmuch as they brake my covenant*
[b] Or, *lord over them*

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in the day. Naturally Jeremiah does not mean the day on which the Hebrews left Egypt, any more than in vii. 22 (see note), but at that period.

took them by the hand. The metaphor is of a child guided by his father in his faltering steps; it is a beautiful picture of Yahweh's gentleness and loving care: cf. Hos. xi. 1–4, which may have been in the prophet's mind, Isa. xl. 11, xli. 13, xlii. 6, li. 18.

I was an husband. The first person is emphatic, as is the third person in the preceding clause. The verb is found also in iii. 14, where it certainly means 'I am a baal,' that is, both lord and husband (see the note). This does not yield a good sense here, and some have wished to give the word the meaning 'to loathe,' 'to reject.' This is philologically dubious, but the sense is that required, and a very slight alteration in the Hebrew (*ga'alti* for *ba'alti*) proposed by Giesebrecht gives it. Probably the LXX, which is quoted in Heb. viii. 9 (see the notes on that passage), read this verb, so also the Syriac. We should accordingly substitute here 'and I abhorred them.' Duhm accepts this emendation and draws the inference that Jeremiah cannot have written the passage. The rejection must refer to the exile, but a writer who speaks of this as a rejection of the 'fathers' must himself have lived long afterwards. But this is to overlook the fact that the 'fathers' are in the first instance the generation that came out of Egypt, whom Jeremiah would rightly so describe, since they belonged to the distant past. If we are to press his language, we should be more justified in referring the pronouns which follow ('they,' 'them') to the Hebrews of the Exodus than to the Jews of the Captivity. But obviously Jeremiah is not speaking with such strictness; he looks at the nation as having a continuous life, and while the 'fathers' refers at first to the Hebrews in the wilderness, the prophet passes in the next clauses to the thought of the people throughout its history of rebellion which finally drove Yahweh to the last extremity. The rejection is not to be identified with the exile, it is its antecedent. Besides, the exile of the northern tribes was very present to Jeremiah's mind, and that had taken place a good deal more than a century earlier. We are accordingly not justified in drawing the inference that the passage must have been written long after Jeremiah's time.

33. Now follows the positive description of the New Covenant.

that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD; I will put my law in their inward parts,

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Yahweh will put His law in the inward parts and write it on the heart. Duhm raises the objection, Why did not God do this at the first? Is He not to blame for the failure of the Old Covenant? Cornill points out that such an objection banishes the idea of history, on which elsewhere Duhm himself lays such stress, and we might as well ask why God did not send Jesus at the Creation instead of in the fullness of time. A second objection is that we receive no explanation of the writing of the law on the heart. The writer does not speak of a new or a better law, or any transformation of man's nature. He simply says Yahweh will accomplish it. But such an objection is valid only if the present passage is taken by itself and treated as the author's complete message. If Jeremiah was its author, then it stands in a very rich context, which amply supplies the explanation of what is here left unexplained. He had elsewhere spoken of the circumcision of the heart (iv. 4), he had communicated the Divine promise 'I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD,' and announced their return to Him with their whole heart (xxiv. 7). On this point what is said in the Introduction should be read (vol. i, pp. 43, 44). The 'new birth,' the 'new heart,' as the Gospel proclaims them, are really implied in this great saying. It is not the author's ideal that the nation should become a people of legalists and ritualists, familiar with all the regulations of the ceremonial law and instinctively obeying them. It is rather that in the regenerate personality there should reside the eternal principles of religion and morality as the spring of all action. The Jeremianic origin of the passage is attested by the Second Isaiah's reference (Isa. li. 7) to 'the people in whose heart is my law,' which seems to depend on this verse.

I will put . . . write it. 'Instead of an external law engraven on tables of stone, there will be the law written on tables that are hearts of flesh. An external code must always be rigid and inelastic; frequently it affords no guidance to conduct, and its control acts as an irritant to the natural man. The law written on the heart implies an inner principle which can deal with each case of conscience sympathetically as it arises, and can ensure the fulfilment of its behests, because it has brought the inner life into perfect harmony with itself. The heart, and thus the whole life, has with the engraving of the law upon it, itself become new. The heart embraces not only the emotional and ethical but also the intellectual life. And thus, by being transformed from a foreign ruler into a native and inward impulse, the law gains the power of self-fulfilment.' (Quoted from the editor's and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall 34 teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the

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commentary on *The Epistle to the Hebrews* in *The Century Bible*, pp. 171, 172).

and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Such had indeed been the relationship which the Old Covenant had been designed to establish (Exod. xix. 5, 6, 2 Sam. vii. 24); but God's purpose had been ultimately thwarted by Israel's disobedience. This had created a serious problem for earlier prophets, who solved in various ways the intolerable contradiction involved in the relationship of a holy God to a sinful people: Jeremiah solves it by this doctrine of the New Covenant. The people, not the individual, remains with him as with his predecessors the religious unit. 'But the advance he makes is that Israel's side of the covenant is perfectly fulfilled, because religion has become a matter for the individual. While it was regarded exclusively as national, it was impossible for it to be other than superficial and external. By carrying it into the heart, it became personal, and because each individual was righteous, the aggregate of individuals that formed the nation must be righteous too. Thus we may say that individualism guaranteed the reality of national religion. But by this transformation in the idea of religion the national limitations were really transcended, and since the moral and spiritual are the universal, with Jeremiah's doctrine of the New Covenant universalism was born. The State could perish, and sacrifice be brought to an end, but religion had been detached from these accidents, and could therefore survive them.' (*Hebrews* in *The Century Bible*, p. 172.)

34. As things are, the knowledge of Yahweh is derived from external sources, so that one man communicates it to another, and he in turn to a third. But in the blessed time to come, this knowledge will be the property of each, an inward possession, implanted by God Himself, who gives to all, from the least to the greatest, a heart to know Him (xxiv. 7). And this knowledge is not just the knowledge of the law, even in the highest sense, still less does the prophet mean that each is to become an expert in all the minute regulations of the ceremonial law. Such would, indeed, be an ideal unworthy of Jeremiah. But happily we know from himself what the phrase 'to know me,' so often on his lips (ii. 8, iv. 22, ix. 3, 6, 24, xxii. 16, xxiv. 7), really meant for him. In xxii. 16 he speaks of Josiah as evincing his knowledge of

greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.
35 [S] Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light

Yahweh in that 'he judged the cause of the poor and needy;' and still more definitely in ix. 24 he describes the knowledge of God, which is man's true glory, to be the insight into His character: 'let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth, and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgement, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight.' Such an insight into the character of Yahweh, it is the Divine purpose to implant in every man. And a character and conduct on the part of each, corresponding to Yahweh's own character and conduct, will be the inevitable outcome of this gracious dealing with them. We have an echo of this verse in Isa. liv. 13, 'And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD.'

I will forgive . . . no more. Naturally, ideal relations could not be restored while the sin of Israel remained unpardoned and ever present to the Divine consciousness. The disturbing element must be removed, an amnesty in the fullest sense of the term must be proclaimed. Clemency will forgive, but, a strange paradox, Omniscience will forget!

35–37. This section is regarded by several, though not, as is sometimes said, by all critics as a later addition. Movers and Hitzig attributed it to the Second Isaiah; this view was rejected by Graf, who, however, thought that 35, 36 seemed like a supplementary insertion, 37 like a marginal gloss. Giesebrecht, Kuenen, Stade, Cornill, Kent, and Gillies treat it as late; Duhm, it need hardly be said, regards it as non-Jeremianic, but he also assigns it to another author than 31–34. It is, nevertheless, attributed to Jeremiah by Orelli, König, Bulmerincq, Rothstein, Köberle, and apparently Driver. In the LXX 37 is placed before 35, but it would be too hasty to judge the whole passage on this ground; at most it points to a certain probability that 37 was originally a marginal gloss, which has been taken into the text, now at this point now at that. Verse 37 is also, alike in style and content, scarcely on Jeremiah's level; the measuring of heaven and searching out of its foundations has no inner connexion, as Giesebrecht points out, with the rejection of Israel. The strenuous nationalism in the whole passage is scarcely favourable to its authenticity. It is true that Jeremiah was a fervent patriot, but he did not put patriotism in the first place, and the very strong, one might almost say exaggerated, expression here given to the thought is not what we expect from him. Further the points of contact with the Second Isaiah are very striking. Giesebrecht quotes as parallels to the form and content of 35 the

by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which [a] stirreth up the sea, that the waves thereof roar; the LORD of hosts is his name:
If these ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, 36

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[a] Or, *stilleth the sea, when &c.* See Isa. li. 15.

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following: Isa. xl. 12, 26, xlii. 5, xliv. 24 ff., xlv. 7, 18. The present writer cannot attach the same weight to these as several critics do, since he does not agree that prophetic passages which speak of Yahweh's work in creation or the rule of nature are necessarily later (see notes on v. 20-22). For the words 'If these ordinances depart from before me' Giesebrecht compares Isa. liv. 9, 10, though this is not a very close parallel. The words 'which stirreth up the sea, that the waves thereof roar; the LORD of hosts is his name' are found in precisely the same form in Isa. li. 15. The unmetrical style is also urged against the passage. It must of course be remembered that the verses are prejudiced by their position. It is difficult to believe that Jeremiah can have uttered them as the climax to the prophecy of the New Covenant. If it were necessary to hold that they were written for their present position, it would be better to assign them to the compiler of xxx, xxxi. But if they are an independent fragment the case is not so clear. The fact that these chapters contain a great deal of secondary matter, the probably later origin of 37 which is closely connected with 35, 36, the nationalist character of the passage, and to some extent the points of contact with II Isaiah, incline the editor to regard 35, 36, as well as 37, as non-Jeremianic, but he cannot pretend to consider the arguments for this position as in any way conclusive.

35. the ordinances of the moon and of the stars. We should probably read, with the LXX, simply 'the moon and the stars.' The mention of 'the ordinances' with reference to moon and stars and not also to the sun is strange.

stirreth up the sea. The verb is used in this sense here and in Isa. li. 15, and also according to the majority of commentators in Job xxvi. 12, though it is not improbable that in the latter passage we should adopt the margin 'stilleth' (see the editor's note).

the LORD of hosts is his name. A similar formula occurs in all three of the 'creation passages' in Amos (iv. 13, v. 8, ix. 6), which are regarded by many scholars as later insertions.

36. these ordinances: i.e. the Divine decrees which the heavenly bodies obey, which not one of them dare disobey (Isa. xl. 26). Just as soon should those laws fail which hold the universe together as an ordered system, as Israel's national existence be finally destroyed.

then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a na-
37 tion before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD: If heaven
above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth
searched out beneath, then will I also cast off all the seed
of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.
38 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city
shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananel
39 unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line
shall yet go out straight onward unto the hill Gareb, and
40 shall turn about unto Goah. And the whole valley of

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37. The point in the comparison is the impossibility of the events happening. As little as man can measure the expanse of heaven or work down to the bases on which the world's fabric rests, so little can God cast Israel away on account of its sin. This is hardly in the manner of such a prophet as Amos, who definitely contemplated the final rejection of Israel for its sin.

38–40. This is anti-climax indeed. It is hardly likely that a prophet such as Jeremiah would have concerned himself with the future boundaries of Jerusalem in this minute way. In the post-exilic period the people were much preoccupied with questions such as this and the restoration of the fortifications. The closest parallel is to be found in Zech. xiv, which may even have suggested our passage. The extent of the city is not the only point of interest to the author; he emphasizes also its dedication to Yahweh, both at the beginning and the end of the oracle.

38. the tower of Hananel. This is similarly mentioned in Zech. xiv. 10. Its position is defined by Neh. iii. 1, xii. 39 as at the north-east corner of the city, while **the gate of the corner,** which is also mentioned in Zech. xiv. 10, seems from 2 Kings xiv. 13, 2 Chron. xxvi. 9, to have been at the north-west corner. This verse accordingly indicates the limits of the north wall of the city from east to west.

39. the hill Gareb and **Goah** are mentioned nowhere else. Presumably we start from the north-west corner and turn south (Giesebrecht reads 'southward' instead of 'straight onward,' perhaps rightly) or south-west as far as the hill Gareb; from which the line makes a turn, perhaps due south till Goah is reached. For Goah Cheyne suggests Gibeah 'hill,' identifying it with Olivet.

40. The regeneration of Jerusalem is to go so far that even the unclean districts on the south, the valley of Hinnom defiled with human sacrifice ('the dead bodies'), are to be taken into the city and yet not to compromise its sanctity. Rather they will be the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.

[S] The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD **32**

redeemed from their uncleanness by the mighty holiness resident within it, so that the whole city will be holy to Yahweh.

the ashes: properly 'fat,' i.e. the ashes which resulted from the burning of the fat of the victims.

the fields unto the brook Kidron. The Hebrew presents us with two alternative readings, one of which is adopted in R.V., while the other gives us a word which, if it is not a mere blunder, is not found elsewhere, and the meaning of which is uncertain; perhaps, as Graf supposed, places where rubbish was deposited. Cheyne follows Klostermann in reading 'furnaces.' The valley of Kidron is on the east of Jerusalem.

the horse gate: according to Neh. iii. 27, 28, was near the Temple on the south-east of Jerusalem.

xxxii. THE REDEMPTION OF A PIECE OF FAMILY PROPERTY BY JEREMIAH, AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

The incident here recorded is obviously historical, and its meaning lies on the surface. At a time when the outlook was very dark, and landed property seemed the most hopeless form of investment, Jeremiah exercised his right of redemption, and bought with all due legal formalities a field from his cousin Hanamel. By this action he expressed his conviction that, in spite of the impending destruction of the State and captivity of the people, the time would come when property would be bought, no longer as a venture of faith, but as one of the ordinary transactions of life in which security of tenure could be taken for granted. The reasons which prompted Hanamel's offer to his cousin are unknown, but probably the scarcity and the consequent high prices had reduced him to the necessity of selling his land. That he should have gone to Jeremiah is remarkable, in view of the bitter persecution the prophet had had to endure from his kinsmen at Anathoth. We gather further from the incident that Jeremiah was apparently possessed of a competence.

While the incident itself is clearly historical, the chapter raises difficult critical problems. The historical introduction explaining Jeremiah's circumstances at the time is regarded by most recent critics as secondary. In the prayer of Jeremiah Stade rejected in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was

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17–23, and found considerable support in this view. Duhm carried through the criticism to the extent of rejecting the whole of 16–44, and his results have been accepted by Cornill and Kent. Schmidt had independently reached the same result. Giesebrecht takes 1–5, 17–23, 28–42 as later insertions, while Gillies and Rothstein pass a similar judgement. The detailed discussion is best reserved for the notes; here the editor may simply say that he regards 1–5, 17–23, 28–35 as later additions; and 36–44 as Jeremianic in basis, but in its present form later than the destruction of Jerusalem, and perhaps worked over by the editor.

xxxii. 1–5. In the tenth year of Zedekiah Jeremiah received a revelation when he was imprisoned in the court of the guard. For the king had imprisoned him because he had said that Yahweh would give Jerusalem to the king of Babylon, and Zedekiah should be captured and taken to Babylon, and be there till Yahweh visited him, so that the war with the Chaldeans was doomed to failure.

6–15. Yahweh told me that Hanamel my cousin would come and ask me to buy his field in Anathoth, which I had the right to purchase. So when he came and asked me to do this, I knew that it was Yahweh who had told me. I bought the field for seventeen shekels, with all the due legal formalities, and gave the deed of purchase to Baruch, charging him to put them in an earthen vessel that they might be long preserved. For Yahweh proclaims that property shall once again be bought in the land.

16–27. When I had delivered the deed to Baruch I prayed thus: O Yahweh, Creator of the world, for whom nothing is too hard, merciful to thousands and repaying the children for the sins of their fathers, wise and mighty, observant of all men's ways that they may receive the due reward of their deeds, who didst win for Thyself a name in Egypt, and didst bring Israel thence with great wonders to this plentiful land, wherein Thy people have utterly disobeyed Thee, the siege mounts are here for the capture of the city, and by sword, famine, and pestilence it will be delivered into the hand of the Chaldeans; yet Thou hast said, Buy the field, although the city is given up to the Chaldeans. Then Yahweh answered, 'I am Yahweh, is anything too wonderful for me?'

28–35. Therefore thus saith Yahweh: I will deliver this city to the Chaldeans, who shall capture and burn it, polluted as it is with idolatry. The people have done evil from their youth, the city has provoked Me from the day it was built, so that I will remove it out of My sight for the sins which have angered Me. They have turned from Me in disobedience to My urgent instruction, the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar. Now at that 2

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defiling My house with their idols, and offering their children to Molech, though I had never enjoined anything so horrible upon them.

36–44. Yet to this city, now captured by Babylon, I will bring back its people from their dispersion, and cause them to dwell safely in it. They shall be My people, I will be their God. I will give them a heart to fear Me, will make an everlasting covenant with them, and plant them in the land. As I have brought evil on them, so I will bring all the good I have promised. Fields shall again be bought in all parts of the land with all the due formalities of the law.

xxxii. 1–5. This introduction, narrating the circumstances in which the transactions here recorded took place, is apparently editorial. The suggestion which it conveys to the reader is that Jeremiah's imprisonment was due to Zedekiah's resentment at the prediction of his capture and exile to Babylon, whereas it was due rather to the hostility of the princes and those responsible for the conduct of the military defence. The king was as friendly to Jeremiah as he dared to be, and used his prerogative to protect him as far as possible. But the passage is quite trustworthy in its indication of the period at which the event happened. The prophet's arrest took place in the interval between the first and second part of the siege, when the Babylonian army had left Jerusalem on account of the relief expedition sent by Egypt. He used the opportunity to start for Anathoth to attend to his property there, but was arrested on the pretext that he was deserting to the Chaldeans. After many days spent in the prison, he was removed, on his own petition to the king, to the court of the guard, and remained there till the city was taken (xxxvii. 11–21, xxxviii. 28). It was while he was in this condition of honourable confinement, in which his friends were permitted to visit him, that Hanamel came to request him to buy his field. We do not know definitely whether the siege had been resumed, but since 'many days' had elapsed between Jeremiah's arrest and his removal to the court of the guard, the probabilities are that the city had been again invested. This view is also favoured by the statement in 2, 'at that time the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem.' In that case Hanamel would already be in Jerusalem, and had not come in from Anathoth in order to sell his land. (The contrary view taken by Cornill in his commentary, p. 359, is withdrawn, in favour of the view here taken, on p. xxxvii.)

1. the tenth year of Zedekiah. The siege of Jerusalem began in the ninth year of his reign (see xxxix. 1).

2. Jeremiah the prophet. We have here the same designation

time the king of Babylon's army besieged Jerusalem: and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the guard,
3 which was in the king of Judah's house. For Zedekiah king of Judah had shut him up, saying, Wherefore dost thou prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon,
4 and he shall take it; and Zedekiah king of Judah shall not escape out of the hand of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him mouth to mouth, and his eyes
5 shall behold his eyes; and he shall lead Zedekiah to Babylon, and there shall he be until I visit him, saith the LORD: though ye fight with the Chaldeans, ye shall not prosper?
6 [J] And Jeremiah said, The word of the LORD came

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which is so characteristic a feature in the Hebrew text of the section xxvii–xxix. It is omitted in the LXX.

the court of the guard. This was attached to the king's palace: cf. Neh. iii. 25. A portion of the court was apparently set apart for those whom for any reason it was expedient to keep under observation and restraint, but whom it was undesirable to herd with the inmates of the common prison. The term does not mean the court where the guard was stationed, but the court where prisoners were guarded (see Driver, p. 367).

3–5 are a parenthesis, explaining the grounds on which Zedekiah had imprisoned the prophet.

3. For: so Driver. It is more generally translated 'Where.'

5. The latter part of this verse ('until . . . prosper') is absent from the LXX, and is presumably a later addition. The words 'until I visit him' suggest that a change was to take place in Zedekiah's fortunes, and therefore bears a favourable sense; nevertheless they are ambiguous, and, as such, unlikely to have been uttered by Jeremiah. We have no indication elsewhere that Zedekiah's condition was ameliorated. The author of this addition may have been acquainted with some story of the kind, but it is more probable that he confused Zedekiah with Jehoiachin, to whom such a change of fortune actually came (lii. 31–34).

6. The present text makes the impression that Jeremiah related the incident which follows to Zedekiah in response to his question

unto me, saying, Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum 7
thine uncle shall come unto thee, saying, Buy thee my
field that is in Anathoth: for the right of redemption is
thine to buy it. So Hanamel mine uncle's son came to 8
me in the court of the guard according to the word of the
LORD, and said unto me, Buy my field, I pray thee, that
is in Anathoth, which is in the land of Benjamin: for the
right of inheritance is thine, and the redemption is thine;
buy it for thyself. Then I knew that this was the word of

(3-5), which is obviously impossible. The LXX reads 'And the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying,' and this is accepted by several scholars. It would also be possible to surmount the difficulty by omitting the words 'Jeremiah said.'

7. thine uncle. Usually it is thought, probably correctly, that Shallum, not Hanamel, was Jeremiah's uncle, and this is supported by 9 and the Hebrew text of 8, which definitely speak of Hanamel as 'my uncle's son.' On the other hand, he is called 'my uncle' in 12, but we should probably read 'my uncle's son,' with LXX, Syriac, and a few Hebrew MSS.

the right of redemption. The word for 'redemption' is connected with the word *gō'ēl*. The *gō'ēl* was the next-of-kin, on whom various duties were imposed by this relationship (see Lev. xxv. 25 ff.). The duties had corresponding rights; the *gō'ēl* could choose whether he would exercise them or not, but till he declined no other could undertake them. Thus Boaz could not undertake this office for Ruth until the next-of-kin had declined it (Ruth iii. 9-13, iv. 1-12). Jeremiah had the right of pre-emption because he was actually the next-of-kin, as is indicated by the fact that he had 'the right of inheritance.' The regulations were made to secure that property was kept in the family. We must not press the term 'redemption' to mean that Hanamel's field had been already sold, and that he desired Jeremiah to buy it back. As the following verse shows, Hanamel was still the owner, but apparently was in need of money, as would be very intelligible in the situation. It is to be observed that at this time individual priests possessed landed property, and were able to dispose of it freely: contrast Lev. xxv. 34.

8. which is . . . Benjamin. These words should be omitted, with the LXX; obviously Jeremiah did not need to be told where Anathoth was situated. The words are a gloss introduced from i. 1.

Then I knew . . . the LORD. This is a very striking and instructive statement. In 6 he says, 'The word of the LORD came

9 the LORD. And I bought the field that was in Anathoth

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unto me.' Yet in the present verse we see that he did not know it to be the word of Yahweh till Hanamel actually came. Probably the prophet had a strong impression beforehand that Hanamel would come on this errand. It is by no means impossible that his own projected journey 'into the land of Benjamin, to receive his portion there, in the midst of the people' (xxxvii. 12), may have been connected with some such wish on the part of Hanamel to dispose of his property. Whether this was so or not, he was probably aware of his cousin's financial position and presence in the city, so that the presentiment that he would come to him had its origin in the actual conditions. But such a presentiment the prophet would not have dignified with the name 'the word of Yahweh;' only when it was fulfilled did he know that God had inspired it. Its Divine meaning, however, was not in the visit itself or in the premonition he had received, but in the conviction of Israel's happy restoration it gave him the opportunity of expressing in so vivid and impressive a manner. Just as he learnt a lesson while he watched the potter moulding the clay, so a similarly trivial and commonplace sale of land is seen to be charged with a deep significance. His act is a symbol and a prophecy, it is God's pledge that the old stable condition of things will be restored when there will be a settled state of society in which houses and land would be freely bought and sold. Thus he recognized that behind his cousin's action, and all unknown to him, the Divine impulse had been at work; and also in the preparation he had himself received for his cousin's request.

9. Recognizing God's hand in it all, Jeremiah without any demur buys the field and pays the price. The sum of seventeen shekels may appear small. We may reasonably assume, however, that Jeremiah paid the full price, not the 'prairie value,' which at such a time was all it might have been expected to fetch. Only by paying this could he have taught the lesson he was guided to convey, that property would regain its stability, and be bought for what it was intrinsically worth in normal conditions. The threshing floor and oxen of Araunah were sold for fifty shekels (2 Sam. xxiv. 24), the potter's field for thirty (Matt. xxvii. 3-10). Taking the value of the silver shekel at 2*s.* 9*d.*, seventeen shekels would be equivalent to £2 6*s.* 9*d.* of our money, but the purchasing power would of course be very much greater. Commentators often quote as a parallel the purchase by a Roman, at full price in public auction, of the ground on which Hannibal's army was encamped (Livy xxvi. 11).

that was in Anathoth: should be omitted, as by LXX. The clause in the Hebrew text follows 'mine uncle's son,' the

of Hanamel mine uncle's son, and weighed him the money,
even seventeen shekels of silver. And I subscribed the 10
deed, and sealed it, and called witnesses, and weighed him
the money in the balances. So I took the deed of the 11

E.V. has transposed it to improve the sense. We should follow the LXX also in omitting 'the money, even.'

10. The description which follows has given rise to a good deal of discussion, which it is unnecessary to record here since the true explanation seems to have been furnished by the discovery of deeds in Babylonia and Assyria of the same type as that here described. In his *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws, Contracts, and Letters*, Dr. Johns has given an account of the method commonly pursued in executing deeds : 'As to external form, most of those which may be called "deeds" consist of small pillow-shaped, or rectangular, cakes of clay. In many cases these were enclosed in an envelope, also of clay, powdered clay being inserted to prevent the envelope adhering. Both the inner and outer parts were generally baked hard ; but there are many examples where the clay was only dried in the sun. The envelope was inscribed with a duplicate of the text. Often the envelope is more liberally sealed than the inner tablet. This sealing, done with a cylinder-seal running on an axle, was repeated so often as to render its design difficult to make out, and to add greatly to the difficulty of reading the text' (pp. 10, 11). See also Jeremias, *The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East*, vol. ii, p. 281 : 'The clay tablet was wrapped in another layer, and upon the outer cover of clay the contents were inscribed together with the names of the witnesses, and the seal was rolled upon it also.' We have here then the same mode apparently followed, the deed 'which was open' was the outer case containing a copy of the deed itself which was sealed up within it. The Hebrew text may have been glossed, but legal language is proverbially redundant, and it gives a more faithful representation than the LXX, which has been preferred by several who were not aware of the facts mentioned above. The object of repeating on the envelope the terms of the deed was that the latter might be preserved from any interference, so that if at any time a dispute arose, if the writing on the envelope was in any degree obliterated or there was a suspicion that it had been tampered with, the case might be broken and the deed itself consulted. Even to the present day, Dr. Johns tells us, 'When the envelope has been preserved unbroken, the interior is usually perfect, except where the envelope may have adhered to it' (loc. cit., p. 11).

11. The LXX reads simply, 'And I took the deed of the pur-

purchase, both that which was sealed, [a]*according to* the law
12 and custom, and that which was open: and I delivered
the deed of the purchase unto Baruch the son of Neriah,
the son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel mine
uncle's *son*, and in the presence of the witnesses that subscribed
the deed of the purchase, before all the Jews that
13 sat in the court of the guard. And I charged Baruch
14 before them, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God

[a] †Or, containing *the terms and conditions*

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chase which was sealed,' the rest of the verse being omitted. Several modern scholars accept this text, and get rid of the double deed. It is true that in the next verse we read of 'the deed of the purchase,' as if there were only one. But, in the light of what has been already said, it will be seen to be quite natural that the same deed might be spoken of in the singular or in the plural, according as it was contemplated as a whole or in its separate parts. There is no thought of two separable documents, but of two combined together. At the same time it is not unlikely that the clause following 'that which was sealed' should be omitted. The margin is preferable to the text, though 'containing' is not expressed in the Hebrew; but the suggestion that the deed itself, which was sealed up, contained anything which was not on the envelope contradicts the legal custom already described, according to which the envelope was inscribed with an exact and complete copy of the deed itself. The words may have originated out of a mistaken repetition of the preceding words, or they may be a gloss. If the latter, they are presumably technical terms. Literally they mean 'the command and the statutes.' The former term is taken by Driver as the injunction 'bidding the seller cede possession of the property;' others translate 'the offer,' explaining this to mean the description of the field. The latter term probably means the conditions of purchase.

12. Baruch: here for the first time mentioned in the book, which we so largely owe to his pious care. He had for long acted as the prophet's amanuensis.

mine uncle's son. The Hebrew simply reads 'my uncle,' but the word for 'son of' has been accidentally omitted; it is read by the LXX, Syriac, and about ten Hebrew MSS. (see note on 7).

in the presence . . . the guard. The care taken that all the legal formalities should be observed is to be noticed, as well as the full-sounding legal phraseology in which it is recorded.

14. The Hebrew is clumsy and redundant, but this may be due

of Israel: Take these deeds, this deed of the purchase, both that which is sealed, and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel; that they may continue many days. For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the 15
God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land.

Now after I had delivered the deed of the purchase 16
unto Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed unto the LORD,
saying, [S] Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the 17

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to the adoption of legal phraseology. Even the LXX recognizes here the open deed in addition to that which was sealed up, and thus attests the fact which it has previously obliterated.

an earthen vessel. The Babylonian and Assyrian deeds were frequently 'stored in pots of unbaked clay. The pots, as a rule, have crumbled away, but they kept out the earth around' (Johns, loc. cit., p. 12). Here Baruch stores the deed 'for many days,' since it will be a long time before the sign receives its fulfilment. In times of disturbance it was customary to bury things for safe custody; the earthen vessel served this purpose very well.

16-25. This prayer of Jeremiah is in the main a later insertion, as Stade was the first to point out, and as many (including even Findlay) have since recognized. Stade regarded 24, 25 as summarizing Jeremiah's actual prayer, 17-23 being added at a later time. These verses are largely a mosaic of phrases we meet with elsewhere in the book and in Deuteronomy, and they closely resemble the prayer in Neh. ix. 5-38. The long introduction 17-23 is out of proportion to the prayer itself in 24, 25. Moreover the confession of Yahweh's omnipotence in 17 is strange in view of the question which is put to the prophet in 27 as an answer to his prayer. Accordingly we should probably treat 17-23 as late. But it by no means follows that we should accept Duhm's view that 24, 25 should be judged similarly. These verses are quite suitable to the situation, and Jeremiah may well have uttered them, in spite of the height his faith had just reached.

17. The invocation begins with the confession of Yahweh's might as displayed in creation (17), then passes to His mercy and retribution and names His great name (18), then affirms His all-seeing scrutiny of human conduct, that each may receive his deserts (19). From these universal relations of Yahweh, we pass to His special relation to Israel, beginning with the wonders wrought in Egypt at the Exodus (20, 21) and the entrance of Israel on the possession of Canaan (22), and then confessing the

heaven and the earth by thy great power and by thy stretched out arm; there is nothing too [a] hard for thee:
18 which shewest mercy unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the great, the mighty God, the LORD of
19 hosts is his name: great in counsel, and mighty in work: whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men; to give every one according to his ways, and
20 according to the fruit of his doings: which didst set signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, even unto this day, [b] both in Israel and among *other* men; and madest

[a] Or, *wonderful* [b] Or, *and*

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disobedience which has brought this calamity upon the people (23). We have thus a beautiful and well-ordered description of Yahweh's attributes and work as the later theology described it.

thy stretched out arm: see note on xxvii. 5. In 21 it is used in its more usual connexion with a great act of Divine deliverance.

hard. The word is used of what lies outside the usual course of nature or events; often it bears the meaning 'wonderful,' but 'hard' is preferable here. The LXX gives an inferior text 'hidden from thee.'

18. unto thousands. The reference is clearly to the Decalogue (Exod. xx. 6, Deut. v. 10), the text of which has become so familiar that the author quotes it in this abbreviated, allusive form in the confidence that the reader will supply the rest. The passage means that God shows mercy to thousands who belong to those who love Him. Thus while the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation, the principle of solidarity works on a far vaster scale in the bestowment of reward for love of God and observance of His commandments.

into the bosom. The folds on the bosom of the Oriental robe served as a pocket; it was large enough for infants (Num. xi. 12) or lambs (Isa. xl. 11) to be carried in it. For the phrase 'to recompense into the bosom' cf. Isa. lxv. 6, Ps. lxxix. 12.

19. For the end of the verse see note on xvii. 10.

20. Cf. Deut. vi. 22, Neh. ix. 10.

even unto this day. This is difficult, since obviously the 'signs and wonders' in Egypt ceased at the Exodus. Perhaps the simplest expedient is to read 'and unto this day.' The expression is in any case somewhat loose. Cornill thinks it means

thee a name, as at this day; and didst bring forth thy 21
people Israel out of the land of Egypt with signs, and
with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with a stretched
out arm, and with great terror; and gavest them this 22
land, which thou didst swear to their fathers to give
them, a land flowing with milk and honey; and they 23
came in, and possessed it; but they obeyed not thy
voice, neither walked in thy law; they have done nothing
of all that thou commandedst them to do: therefore thou
hast caused all this evil to come upon them: [J] behold 24
the mounts, they are come unto the city to take it; and
the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans that
fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine,
and of the pestilence: and what thou hast spoken is
come to pass; and, behold, thou seest it. And thou 25
hast said unto me, O Lord God, Buy thee the field for

'which are celebrated unto this day,' but suggests that 'in the land of Egypt' may be a gloss.

21. Cf. Deut. iv. 34, xxvi. 8. The 'terror' is the dread struck into Egypt and the surrounding nations by the judgements of God on Egypt and the wonders He wrought for His people at the Exodus: cf. Exod. xv. 14–16; Deut. ii. 25; Joshua ii. 9–11, v. 1.

22. Cf. xi. 5. The theme of this verse and the following is to be found in a very expanded form in Neh. ix. 22–35.

23. Cf. xi. 8.

24. the mounts: cf. vi. 6, xxxiii. 4; 2 Sam. xx. 15; 2 Kings xix. 32; Isa. xxxvii. 33; Ezek. iv. 2, xvii. 17, xxvi. 8. These were earthen embankments from which the storming parties made their assaults. This verse (if Jeremiah's) favours the view that when the purchase of the field took place the siege had been resumed.

is given: a perfect of certainty; the meaning is not that the Babylonians had already captured the city, but that they would undoubtedly do so, aided as they were by the famine and plague which were decimating the defenders.

25. It would be too prosaic to object that God had not said this; Jeremiah had understood Him to mean this by the request his cousin had made. The LXX after 'money' has an addition. It reads: 'So I wrote the deed, and sealed it, and called witnesses.' This may be the original text.

money, and call witnesses; whereas the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

26 Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, say-

26–44. We have now the answer of Yahweh to Jeremiah's prayer. That it is, as a whole, a later composition lies almost on the surface. It is largely irrelevant to the situation. We have an announcement of Yahweh's intention to destroy Jerusalem on account of the sins of the people from its earliest days (28–35). But this had for long been the theme of Jeremiah's preaching, and had the section occurred in one of his own addresses to the people it would, so far as its general contents go, and its expression, have seemed quite suitable. But that in answer to his question as to the purchase of the land Yahweh should be represented as communicating to Jeremiah what for many years the prophet had been saying, and express it in the same language as he had been using, is not easily reconcilable with the authenticity of these verses. They are a late insertion put together, presumably by the editor, out of Jeremianic phrases. These objections do not lie to the same extent against 36–44. They are relevant to the question which the prophet has laid before God, and are less conventional in style. At the same time there are features which are difficult to harmonize with the actual situation of Jeremiah. In 36, according to the Hebrew text, the people ('ye say') and not Jeremiah merely, speak of the city as given into the hand of the king of Babylon, though this does not seem to have been their belief at the time. But the LXX 'thou sayest' should probably be accepted, and the verse is then free from objection. Verse 43 seems to presuppose that the exile had already taken place, and 37 looks for a return from a wide dispersion. It is difficult, accordingly, to regard the whole passage as dating from the tenth year of Zedekiah. But if the prayer in 24, 25 was uttered by Jeremiah in the circumstances recorded, it is natural to conclude that the answer belongs to the same time. An answer to the question he lays before Yahweh is given in 43, 44, and there is no substantial reason for disputing the authenticity of the latter verse, though, as we have seen, 43 apparently reflects a later situation. But with this we should take 26, 27, which form a necessary introduction. Even so 44 is rather abrupt. The present writer is therefore inclined to think that, while 28–35 is wholly editorial, the rest of the section is substantially Jeremianic, but committed to writing in its present form after the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the captives had taken place. Even the reference to the dispersion is not necessarily impossible on Jeremiah's lips: cf. xxiii. 3, 7, 8, xxiv. 9.

26. unto Jeremiah: read, with the LXX, **unto me.**

g, Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is 27
ere any thing too hard for me?
[S] Therefore thus saith the LORD: Behold, I will 28
ive this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into
e hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and he
all take it: and the Chaldeans, that fight against this 29
ity, shall come and set this city on fire, and burn it,
ith the houses, upon whose roofs they have offered
cense unto Baal, and poured out drink offerings unto
ther gods, to provoke me to anger. For the children 30
f Israel and the children of Judah have only done that
hich was evil in my sight from their youth: for the
hildren of Israel have only provoked me to anger with
e work of their hands, saith the LORD. For this city 31

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27. This verse has been anticipated by 17 (see notes), but it is uite suitable to the situation, and we should rather infer that 17 secondary than pass this judgement on both alike.

28. The introductory formula, 'Therefore thus saith the LORD,' ould be in place in an address by the prophet; it is quite unuitable in an answer given by Yahweh Himself to the prophet. he opening sentence is an expansion of 3: the LXX simply eproduces that verse.

29. Cf. xix. 13, xxi. 10.

30. The reference to the sin of Israel alongside of the sin of udah, while not strictly relevant to the threat of judgement on he latter, may pass, since the writer is looking back on the whole istory of the people. But the verdict, while it does not absoutely contradict ii. 2, inasmuch as the early days in Canaan ight be regarded as still belonging to the nation's youth, agrees etter with Ezekiel's estimate than Jeremiah's: cf. Ezek. xx. 5–6. The second half of the verse is absent from the LXX, and he reference to 'the children of Israel' favours the omission. If is used in the same restricted sense as in the former part of the erse, the omission of Judah is unaccountable, since the writer is oncerned especially with it. If, however, it includes the outhern as well as the northern tribes, it is difficult to think at the writer would use the designation in such different senses consecutive clauses.

31. The passage reads as if the author thought that the Israelites uilt Jerusalem. It is hardly credible that he did so; the expres-

hath been to me a provocation of mine anger and of my
fury from the day that they built it even unto this day;
32 that I should remove it from before my face: because
of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children
of Judah, which they have done to provoke me to anger,
they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their
prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of
33 Jerusalem. And they have turned unto me the back,
and not the face: and though I taught them, rising up
early and teaching them, yet they have not hearkened
34 to receive instruction. But they set their abominations
in the house which is called by my name, to defile it.
35 And they built the high places of Baal, which are in the
valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and
their daughters to pass through *the fire* unto Molech
which I commanded them not, neither came it into my
[a] mind, that they should do this abomination; to cause
Judah to sin.

36 [J] And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God o

[a] Heb. *heart*.

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sion is loose. Probably he is under the influence of Ezekiel' description of the heathen origin of Jerusalem (Ezek. xvi. 3–6) According to this prophet, it well maintained a character harmonious with this origin after the Israelites gained possession o it. It is interesting to see how the writer passes to and fro from city (28, 29, 31) to people (30, 32, 33).

32, 33. For 32^{a} cf. xi. 17; for 32^{b}, 33^{a} cf. ii. 26, 27; for 33^{b} c vii. 13, 25, xxv. 3, 4.

34, 35. These verses are largely identical with vii. 30^{b}, 31 (se the notes). We have in that passage 'the high places of Topheth and 'to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire.' Further it concludes with 'neither came it into my mind.' On Molec see the note on vii. 31 (vol. i, p. 155). Our passage agrees wit xix. 5 in speaking of 'the high places of Baal' (see vol. i, p. 237

36. The opening words can hardly be in their original form since Yahweh would not speak of Himself in this way (see note o 28). 'Therefore' is also inappropriate in this connexion, but

rael, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It is given into
e hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the
mine, and by the pestilence: Behold, I will gather them 37
ut of all the countries, whither I have driven them in
ine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and
will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause
em to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and 38
will be their God: and I will give them one heart and 39
ne way, that they may fear me for ever; for the good of
em, and of their children after them: and I will make 40
n everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn
way [a] from them, to do them good; and I will put my

[a] Heb. *from after them.*

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unobjectionable when 28–35 have been removed. It is a little urious that this verse should begin to speak of the city, and that 37 we should pass abruptly to the people in the dispersion.

ye say: see the note on 26–44 (p. 122). The LXX 'thou ayest' harmonizes with 24; the Hebrew seems to have been ssimilated to xxxiii. 10.

37. Giesebrecht suggests that originally 42 stood before 37–41. or 37^a cf. xxiii. 3, and for the last clause cf. xxiii. 6.

38. Cf. xxxi. 33.

39. The LXX reads 'another way and another heart;' the ifference between 'one' and 'another' in Hebrew is infinite-imal, and it is impossible to say with certainty which is the riginal. We may compare Ezek. xi. 19, 'And I will give them ne heart, and I will put a new spirit within you;' the parallel assage Ezek. xxxvi. 26, however, reads 'A new heart also will give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.' It is on the vhole probable that we should retain the Hebrew here. All earts would be of one accord to adopt the same way of life, and hat the way along which God called them to walk. For the rest f the verse cf. Deut. iv. 10, vi. 24.

40. and I will . . . with them: cf. Isa. lv. 3; Ezek. xvi. 60, xxxvii. 26. The term 'new covenant' is not actually used, but the same thing is meant; and the latter part of the verse expresses the same thought as xxxi. 33^b in another form. The fear of God is implanted by God Himself in the heart, that they may not go astray from Him.

I will not turn away from them. As the margin says, the

fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.
41 Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I wil
plant them in this land [a]assuredly with my whole heart an
42 with my whole soul. For thus saith the LORD: Like a
I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so wil
I bring upon them all the good that I have promise
43 them. And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof y
say, It is desolate, without man or beast; it is given int
44 the hand of the Chaldeans. Men shall buy fields fo

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[a] Heb. *in truth*.

Hebrew means ‘from after them.’ Giesebrecht finds this surprising, since elsewhere the people is represented as following Yahweh, no Yahweh as following the people. Accordingly he suggests ‘I wil not cease from having compassion upon them.’ Cornill justifies the present text by a reference to Deut. xxiii. 14 (Heb. 15), wher we read ‘that he see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away fro after thee.’ And, as he points out further, Giesebrecht's emendation eliminates the antithetic parallelism with ‘they shall not depart from me’ at the close of the verse.

to do them good. If these words belong to the true text, i would be better to omit the comma before them, and connec closely with the preceding clause, the sense being that Yahwe will not cease from following them to do them good. But the are absent from the LXX and are best omitted, especially as w have not only had a similar clause in 39, but have practically th same words in 41, from which the insertion in our verse has probably been made.

41. The former part of the verse is perhaps modelled on Deut xxviii. 63: cf. xxx. 9; Isa. lxii. 5, lxv. 19; Zeph. iii. 17.

I will plant them: cf. xxiv. 6, xxxi. 27, 28.

with my whole heart and with my whole soul. The onl case in which this expression is used with reference to God.

42. This repeats in another form the thought of xxxi. 28.

43. This verse seems to presuppose that the exile had bee already accomplished, so that the land lies desolate. At the sam time, according to the Hebrew text, the verse was written i Palestine (‘this land’), so that its Jeremianic origin is ver dubious; it would be easier to accept it if, with the LXX, we rea ‘the land.’ For ‘ye say’ the LXX, as in 36, reads ‘thou sayest,’ but the grounds for accepting it here are less cogent than in 36.

44. For the districts enumerated in this verse see note on xvii 26, where there is a similar enumeration but in a somewhat differen money, and subscribe the deeds, and seal them, and call witnesses, in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the hill country, and in the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD.

[R] Moreover the word of the LORD came unto Jere- 33

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order. Here 'the land of Benjamin' stands first, since the field Jeremiah had bought was situated in it. The fullness of detail is noticeable also in the mention of the legal formalities accompanying a sale.

xxxiii. RENEWED PROMISES OF RESTORATION AND BLESSEDNESS.

This section is closely connected with xxxii, and, like it, raises serious critical problems. The chapter falls into two main divisions: (a) 1-13, (b) 14-26. The latter is omitted in the LXX, and its Jeremianic authorship is surrendered by most recent scholars. The evidence of the LXX is here very weighty. We can see no sound reason why the translator should have omitted the passage if it had been in his Hebrew text; it is therefore likely that it is a very late addition. The omission has been explained as due to its numerous repetitions of passages found elsewhere, and the non-fulfilment of the prophecies with reference to David and his family and the Levites. But the translator does not make a practice of striking out repetitions (see vol. i, p. 68), and if he had omitted promises which in his time had not been fulfilled, his handling of the book would have been drastic indeed. The fact that promises had not been fulfilled did not mean that their fulfilment would never come. The Jews of the post-exilic period turned with peculiar interest to the glowing prophecies of future happiness which stood in such inviting contrast to their unhappy state; their temptation was not to eliminate but to add such passages. The repetitions which the passage contains are not favourable to its authenticity, nor yet the prominence given to the Levitical priests, which has no parallel in Jeremiah's own writing.

The former part of the chapter (1-13) has been very generally accepted as Jeremiah's, apart from 2, 3. Duhm regards 1-13 as late, and is followed by Cornill, so that these scholars recognize nothing as Jeremiah's in xxxii, xxxiii beyond xxxii. 6-15. Schmidt independently assumes much the same position. This position we have not been able to adopt with reference to xxxii, and the case with xxxiii. 1-13 is similar. We should probably recognize a Jeremianic basis which has been worked over by the editor.

miah the second time, while he was yet shut up in the court
2 of the guard, saying, [S] Thus saith the LORD that doeth

Even in its present form, however, it is earlier than 14–26, which from its absence in the LXX we must infer to be one of the latest elements in the book.

xxxiii. 1. This is the second revelation which came to Jeremiah in the court of the guard.

2, 3. Yahweh, the accomplisher of His purpose, says: Call and I will answer, and disclose unknown secrets.

4–9. The houses are being broken down to form defences against the assaults of the Chaldeans, but the slain of Yahweh will be many. Yet Yahweh will heal His people, restore Israel and Judah, cleanse them from all their guilt, and make Jerusalem so glorious that the nations will fear.

10–13. Once more the land now desolate shall ring with rejoicing, and life will be resumed in all its fullness as of yore. All over the country there shall be the homesteads of shepherds, guarding their flocks.

14–18. In the days to come Yahweh will raise up a righteous shoot to David, who shall reign as a righteous King over Judah and Israel, and his name shall be 'Yahweh is our righteousness.' For David shall never fail of a successor on the throne of Israel, nor the Levitical priests of one to offer sacrifice.

19–22. If Yahweh's covenant with day and night should be broken, then it may be broken with David and with the Levitical priests. As the stars cannot be numbered nor the sand measured, so shall the seed of David and the Levites be multiplied.

23–26. In answer to the complaint that Yahweh has cast off His people, He affirms that only when day and night cease, or the ordinances of heaven and earth, will He cast away the seed of Jacob, or the house of David.

xxxiii. 1. See note on xxxii. 2.

2, 3. On account of their Deutero-Isaianic phraseology, Movers and Hitzig assigned these verses to the Second Isaiah. Graf rejected this, as he rejected the similar treatment of xxx, xxxi, but he admits that 'they make the impression that they are an insertion by a later hand.' This judgement has been accepted by a large number of scholars. Their elimination of it was of course bound up with the probably correct view that 1–13 was as a whole the work of Jeremiah. Naturally if the whole section is late, as Duhm thinks, there is no necessity to regard 2, 3 as an insertion. The reference to what follows as things previously unknown does not suit the contents of 4–13, since they do not contain anything beyond what may be found in xxxi, xxxii.

that doeth it. If the text is right, there may be an allusion

it, the LORD that formeth it to establish it; the LORD is
his name: Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and will 3
shew thee great things, and [a]difficult, which thou knowest
not. [J] For thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, con- 4

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[a] Heb. *fenced in.*

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to Isa. xxii. 11 (this passage seems to have been in the author's mind: cf. 4, 5 with Isa. xxii. 10), where we have (in the Hebrew) the same indefinite mode of reference, 'that had done it,' 'that fashioned it,' i. e. His purpose. But the text here is otherwise not free from objection; and the LXX reading, 'who made the earth and formed it to establish it,' is to be preferred: cf. Isa. xlv. 18. The word 'to form' is frequently used in II Isaiah in parallelism with 'make;' for 'Yahweh is his name' cf. 'Yahweh of hosts is his name,' Isa. xlvii. 4, xlviii. 2, li. 15, liv. 5, but also Jer. xxxi. 35, xxxii. 18, and the creation passages in the Book of Amos (iv. 13, v. 8, ix. 6) which many scholars consider to be late. In Jer. x. 1-16, a passage which also has marked affinities with II Isaiah, we find the same turn of phrase in a context which emphasizes the thought of Yahweh as the Creator, 'for he is the former of all things; and Israel is the tribe of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts is his name' (x. 16).

The third verse is closely parallel to Isa. xlviii. 6^b: 'I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, which thou hast not known.' It is not unlikely that, as several scholars following Ewald believe, we should, with some Hebrew MSS., read 'hidden' for 'difficult' here, the two words differing only by a single consonant (i. e. n^e*tsuroth* for b^e*tsuroth*). The word rendered 'difficult' means 'inaccessible,' but it is used elsewhere of cities.

4, 5. The historical situation here reflected is the time of the siege as indicated in 1, so that the verses may well be Jeremiah's. But the passage is very difficult in its present form, and unquestionably corrupt. Graf, in spite of his loyalty to the Hebrew text, closes his long enumeration and discussion of the various suggestions made with the words 'One must renounce a restoration and satisfactory explanation of the plainly corrupt passage' (p. 418). The reference to the houses is itself strange, since we do not hear that they were destroyed because on their roofs idolatrous sacrifice had been offered (xix. 13, xxxii. 29), which would have formed a good contrast with the restoration of the city, but simply of their destruction to furnish materials for the defence (cf. Isa. xxii. 10), for which the kings' houses would not have been expected to be employed. But, apart from this, the present text is impossible, as indeed is clear from the R.V. 'They come' cerning the nouses of this city, and concerning the houses

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obviously cannot refer to the houses, yet that is the grammatical sense. Even if we strain the words to mean the inhabitants, we not only do unjustifiable violence to the language, but we do not gain a good sense. The writer should have said 'They go out,' and there is no point in the mention of the houses. If this sense had been intended, it should have been expressed in a much simpler way, such as 'the houses of this city . . . against the swords. And their inhabitants go out to fight,' &c. The easiest expedient is to omit the particle rendered 'with,' and translate 'The Chaldeans are coming to fight.' This gets rid of the difficulty caused by the apparent reference in 'They come' to the houses, and 'come' is the appropriate verb for the attack of the besieging party. It is still surprising in view of the fact that the introduction suggests an oracle specially devoted to 'the houses,' that there is no reference to them specifically in the sequel, though the bringing of new flesh on the city (6) is a figurative way of saying that her breaches are made good. Such breaches, however, are in the main those caused by the enemy when the city had been captured, not those made by the defenders. The other attempts to restore the passage to its original form do not seem any more satisfactory. Duhm omits all after 'broken down' to 'Chaldeans,' and points the next word differently and gets the sense 'which are broken down and filled with the dead bodies,' &c. He supposes that the author of this insertion took objection to the statement that the houses were broken down while the city was still uncaptured and added these words as an explanation. The insertion itself is emended by him 'for the mounts and bulwarks, when they began to fight with the Chaldeans.' This very clever restoration is open to criticism in detail, but it is too violent to inspire confidence, and the mounds are not represented elsewhere as used for defence but only for attack. Cornill suggested a radical reconstruction in the *Sacred Books of the Old Testament*, and has virtually repeated it in his commentary: 'which are broken down, against which the Chaldeans come with mounds and swords to fight and to fill with the dead bodies,' &c. This gives a fairly satisfactory sense, but it is secured at the cost of rearranging and to some extent rewriting the passage. But, like Duhm's suggestion, it does not remove the difficulty previously mentioned, that the houses receive a prominence when the subject-matter of the oracle is announced which is not justified by the sequel. The present writer is accordingly driven to the view that the difficulty has been created not by insertion but by accidental omission; he suspects that several words have fallen out after 'broken down' or possibly after 'sword,' and that the attempt to restore sense to the passage thus mutilated has possibly led to further corruption.

of the kings of Judah, which are broken down *to make*
a defence against the mounts, and against the sword : They 5
come to fight with the Chaldeans, but it is to fill them with
the dead bodies of men, whom I have slain in mine anger
and in my fury, and for all whose wickedness I have hid
my face from this city. Behold, I will bring it [a] health and 6
cure, and I will cure them ; and I will reveal unto them
abundance of peace and truth. And I will cause the cap- 7
tivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and
will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them 8
from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against
me ; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they
have sinned against me, and whereby they have trans-
gressed against me. And *this city* shall be to me for 9

[a] Or, *healing*

Presumably the oracle dates from a time when the siege had been renewed and houses were pulled down to strengthen the defence ; and affirmed that though this had happened, and the Chaldeans were coming to heap high the dead bodies of the victims of Yahweh's wrath, yet He would bring back fresh flesh to heal the wound of Zion.

6. health : rather **fresh flesh :** see note on viii. 22.

cure them : several read ‘ cure her,’ which may be attested by the LXX, though the clause is in a different place and may be an insertion in its text.

abundance. If the text is correct we must suppose that the word, which does not occur elsewhere in this sense, is an Aramaism. But the versions do not confirm the reading, and the text is probably corrupt. Rothstein suggests ‘ abodes ’ (*lāh m*^{e}*‘ōnōth* for *lāhem ‘ăthereth*), but Duhm's suggestion ‘ treasures ’ (*‘ăthidoth* as in Isa. x. 13) is nearer the Hebrew and suits ‘ reveal ’ admirably, since ‘ treasure ’ is usually something which is hidden.

peace and truth : i. e. peace and stability ; but perhaps we should read, as in xiv. 13, ‘ peace of truth,’ i. e. assured peace.

7. as at the first : i. e. before the disruption of the kingdom ; the reigns of David and Solomon are probably in the writer's mind : cf. Isa. i. 26.

8. Cf. xxxi. 34, Isa. iv. 4, but especially Ezek. xxxvi. 25.

9. Cf. xiii. 11. The emotion aroused in the nations by the exaltation of Zion is apparently one of dread, just as the wonders of

a name of joy, for a praise and for a glory, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and
10 for all the peace that I procure unto it. [S]Thus saith the LORD: Yet again there shall be heard in this place, whereof ye say, It is waste, without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant and
11 without beast, the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that say, Give thanks to the LORD of hosts, for the LORD is good, for his mercy *endureth* for ever: *and of them* that bring *sacrifices of* thanksgiving into the house of the LORD. For I will cause the captivity of the
12 land to return as at the first, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Yet again shall there be in this place,

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the Exodus period struck terror into Egypt and the peoples of Canaan: see on xxxii. 20, 21. It is possible that pleasure rather than dread is intended (cf. Isa. lx. 5), but improbable.

10, 11 presuppose that the Fall of Jerusalem has taken place, and that the land has been laid waste. The opening clauses of 11^a^ contain the reversal of what we read in vii. 34, xvi. 9, xxv. 10. The liturgical formula, 'Give thanks . . . for ever,' is frequent in the later Psalms. This in itself would not necessarily stamp our passage as late; it is, indeed, quite possible that the formula may have been ancient, but if so we should have expected to find it in the earlier psalms. The reference to the thanksgiving offering is almost identical with a similar reference in xvii. 26, which is a late passage (see pp. 225, 226). And the repetition of 7 in the last clause, though in a briefer form, is strange.

12, 13. The same situation as in 10, 11. The verses remind us of xxxi. 2–6, and are partly identical with xvii. 26, xxxii. 43, 44 (see the notes). The writer, as he looks on the wasted country, sees it in imagination once more dotted with the shepherds' homesteads, and the flocks reclining at noon (Song of Songs i. 7) or passing along as their keepers count them to see that none is missing. The idyllic picture would have been congenial to Jeremiah's tastes and ideals; it is questionable, however, whether we really owe it to him.

which is waste, without man and without beast, and in all
the cities thereof, an habitation of shepherds causing their
flocks to lie down. In the cities of the hill country, in the 13
cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South, and in
the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem,
and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks again pass under
the hands of him that telleth them, saith the LORD.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will per- 14
form that good word which I have spoken concerning the
house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah. In 15
those days, and at that time, will I cause a [a] Branch of right-
eousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute
judgement and righteousness in the land. In those days 16
shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely:
and this is *the name* whereby she shall be called, The
LORD is our righteousness. For thus saith the LORD: 17
[b] David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of
the house of Israel; neither shall the priests the Levites 18
want a man before me to offer burnt offerings, and to

[a] See ch. xxiii. 5. [b] Heb. *There shall not be cut off from David.*

14–16. This passage is largely repeated from xxiii. 5, 6, on which see vol. i, pp. 260–2, with a touch introduced from xxix. 10. Very remarkable, however, is it that the name 'Yahweh is our righteousness,' which Jeremiah assigned to the Messiah, is here transferred to the city.

17. The prediction of the permanence of the Davidic dynasty has reference to the future; at the time when the passage was written the monarchy had fallen.

18. the priests the Levites: i. e. the Levitical priests. This is the phrase used by Deuteronomy and in other literature earlier than the Reformation under Nehemiah. It is probable that this passage was written after the distinction between priests and Levites had been established by the acceptance of the Priestly Legislation. If so, the writer avails himself of the archaic mode of expression, which indicated that all the members of the tribe of Levi were entitled to act as priests. This verse is written from a standpoint very different from Jeremiah's.

to offer . . . continually. The burnt-offering was wholly

19 burn [a] oblations, and to do sacrifice continually. And
20 the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, saying, Thus
saith the LORD: If ye can break my covenant of the day,
and my covenant of the night, so that there should not be
21 day and night in their season; then may also my covenant
be broken with David my servant, that he should not have
a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the
22 priests, my ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be
numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured; so will
I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites
23 that minister unto me. And the word of the LORD came
24 to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people

[a] †Or, *meal offerings*

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made over to God; the oblation was the vegetable offering; the sacrifice was used for a feast, of which the offerer and his friends partook, though a portion of course was given to God: see note on vii. 21 (vol. i, p. 151).

20–26. The passage is closely parallel to xxxi. 35, 36, and probably an imitation of it. The Hebrew for 'my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night' is suspicious; if it is correct, as in view of the late origin of the passage it may be, the meaning is apparently the covenant which Yahweh has made with day and night. Possibly we should read 'the covenant' for 'my covenant,' which would restore a regular construction; Duhm thinks the point is that day and night make a covenant with each other, to observe their own season, but this is questionable.

21. For this covenant with David see 2 Sam. vii. 16, 1 Kings ii. 4.

22. Cf. Gen. xv. 5, and for a closer parallel xxii. 17. The comparison is expressed in loose terms, but the meaning is clear. It is remarkable that a prophecy originally spoken of the whole people should here be applied to the royal and priestly families.

24. This verse is difficult. The 'two families' are probably not the house of David and the house of Levi, though the preceding verses have spoken of these, but in accordance with 26 (as in Ezek. xxxv. 10), Israel and Judah. 'This people' according to usage should refer to Israel (i.e. the whole people including both 'families'), but if we read 'before them' at the end of the verse, it would follow that a heathen people is intended. It is therefore probable that, with some versions, we should read 'before me.' A

have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD did choose, he hath cast them off? thus do they despise my people, that they should be no more a nation before them.
Thus saith the LORD: If my covenant of day and night 25
stand not, if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven
and earth; then will I also cast away the seed of Jacob, 26
and of David my servant, so that I will not take of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will [a]cause their captivity to return, and will have mercy on them.

[B] The word which came unto Jeremiah from the 34

[a] Or, *return to their captivity*

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still better sense is given by Duhm's emendation, 'he hath cast them off, and despiseth his people, that it should be no more a nation before him.'

25. Cf. 20. A verb would be expected in the first clause to correspond to 'have appointed.' Duhm has made the very attractive suggestion that we should make a very slight alteration in the word rendered 'my covenant' (*bārā'thi* for *b^e^rīthī*), reading 'If I have not created day and night.' Cornill and Rothstein accept it. If it is original it was naturally assimilated to 20 by some scribe.

26. Duhm and Cornill strike out 'of Jacob, and;' the omission is favoured by the sequel which speaks of 'his seed;' but is not necessary.

xxxiv. 1-7. JEREMIAH WARNS ZEDEKIAH OF THE DISASTER WHICH AWAITS CONTINUED RESISTANCE TO BABYLON.

We now resume the biographical portion of the work, which was of course partially resumed in xxxii. The incident recorded in this section took place probably before the interruption of the siege by the relief army from Egypt, in which the second incident recorded in this chapter falls (21, 22). We may infer from 2 that Jeremiah had not yet lost his liberty. The narrative is quite trustworthy, though possibly mutilated to some extent (see note on 4).

xxxiv. 1-3. When Nebuchadnezzar and his hosts were fighting against Jerusalem and its cities, Jeremiah was sent to warn Zedekiah that Jerusalem would be taken and burnt by the king of Babylon, and he himself would be confronted with the victor and taken to Babylon.

LORD, when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and all his army, and all the kingdoms of the earth that were under his dominion, and all the peoples, fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities thereof, saying:
2 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Go, and speak to Zedekiah king of Judah, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the
3 king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire: and thou

4–7. Yet he should not die by the sword but in peace, with the customary royal burnings and lamentations. So Jeremiah declared this message to Zedekiah, when Babylon was warring against Jerusalem, Lachish, and Azekah, the only cities that remained uncaptured.

xxxiv. 1. Since in 7 we have a fairly precise indication of the time, it is likely that this verse is largely editorial; had Baruch written it he would have inserted here the information he gives in 7. This conclusion is confirmed by the somewhat bombastic style, though the LXX gives us an abbreviated form.

2. Duhm thinks the first part of the verse is editorial, and that Baruch would simply have said 'Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, Thus saith,' &c. His reason is that Jeremiah would not be one of those who had access to the royal presence at any time. It is hardly likely, however, that a prophet of Jeremiah's standing would have found any difficulty in approaching the king, if he went to deliver the word of Yahweh to him. For the latter part of the verse cf. xxi. 10, xxxvii. 8–10, xxxviii. 23.

3. Cf. xxxii. 4, 5. Duhm infers from Baruch's silence as to the blinding of Zedekiah and the execution of his sons that they are unhistorical. He thinks that the king succeeded in establishing his personal innocence at his interview with Nebuchadnezzar, and since Jehoiachin was not used very badly, Zedekiah may have escaped anything worse than imprisonment for life. But we should rather argue, If Jehoiachin, who was personally innocent of his father's rebellion, was taken into captivity and languished in prison through the whole of Nebuchadnezzar's long reign, how should we expect Zedekiah to be treated by a suzerain to whom he owed his throne, when he violated his solemn oath of allegiance, the breach of which he had previously meditated? We may make allowances for the king's difficult position, but we cannot acquit him of serious blame. Ezekiel condemned his action in the strongest terms (Ezek. xvii. 1–21). And his testimony to the blinding of Zedekiah should settle the question: 'and I will bring him to

shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be
taken, and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall
behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall
speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to
Babylon. Yet hear the word of the LORD, O Zedekiah 4
king of Judah: thus saith the LORD concerning thee,
Thou shalt not die by the sword; thou shalt die in 5
peace; and with the burnings of thy fathers, the former
kings which were before thee, so shall they [a] make a burning
for thee; and they shall lament thee, *saying*, Ah
lord! for I have spoken the word, saith the LORD. Then 6

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[a] See 2 Chron. xvi. 14, xxi. 19.

Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there' (xii. 13).

4, 5. These verses raise a serious problem. The most obvious interpretation is that although Zedekiah will have to go to Babylon, he will not be executed but die in peace, and all the wonted honours paid to Jewish kings at their death will be paid to him. But as Hitzig, with the full approval of Graf and some of the best among recent expositors, forcibly argued, such a mitigation by Jeremiah of the consequences of rebellion would be in direct opposition to his invariable attitude and the impression he desired to make. It was also hardly in harmony with the event, for the almost idyllic description of peaceful death and honourable burial would not have prepared the king for the bereavement he suffered and the blinding he had personally to endure. But since Jeremiah could not have said to the king, 'You will have to go into captivity, but matters will not be so bad after all,' we must regard this as a conditional promise. If the king surrenders unconditionally he shall retain his throne till his death, and then be honoured as his predecessors had been. Of course the text in its present form does not say this, but we should rather attribute this to the loss of a few words, than to the unskilful style of the narrator. The beginning of 4 suggests in fact that a contrast to the course the king was pursuing should follow.

with the burnings . . . for thee. The reference is to the burning of sweet spices at the funeral of a king, not to the cremation of the corpse, for this was buried, not burned (see 2 Chron. xvi. 14, xxi. 19). It would be better to read, with LXX, Syr., Vulg., 'as at the burnings.'

Ah lord! See note on xxii. 18.

Jeremiah the prophet spake all these words unto Zedekiah
7 king of Judah in Jerusalem, when the king of Babylon's army fought against Jerusalem, and against all the cities of Judah that were left, against Lachish and against Azekah; for these *alone* remained of the cities of Judah *as* fenced cities.

8 The word that came unto Jeremiah from the Lord,

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7. The LXX omits 'all' and 'that were left;' it would give a better sentence if we omitted the whole clause, reading simply 'against Jerusalem, against Lachish,' &c. Presumably a scribe added after 'Jerusalem' the familiar 'all the cities of Judah;' then a later scribe, observing how incongruous this was, since only two were involved, corrected the text into its present form. Lachish is to be identified with Tell el-Hesy, which is about thirty-five miles south-west of Jerusalem. It was a strongly fortified place, which was occupied by Sennacherib as his base during his campaign in 701 B.C. Azekah has not yet been identified; according to Joshua xv. 35, 1 Sam. xvii. 1, it was in the Shephelah, not far from Socoh: it seems to have been a fortress in the south-west of Judah, about fifteen miles from Jerusalem.

xxxiv. 8–22. CONDEMNATION OF THE RE-ENSLAVEMENT OF HEBREW SLAVES IN VIOLATION OF OATH.

The general situation is fairly clear, but the passage presents some difficulties. During the earlier part of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem, Zedekiah induced his people to liberate their Hebrew slaves. When, however, the siege was raised on account of the relief expedition from Egypt, they forced back into bondage the slaves whom they set free. Their cynical perfidy was aggravated by a blasphemous perjury. For the edict of emancipation was not merely a civil proclamation, it was an oath sworn with all the solemnities of religion, and thus placed under the protection of Yahweh. The human wrong would in any case have excited the prophet's burning indignation; but their shameless violation of the sanctities of religion, this flouting of their God to His face, involved them in a still deeper condemnation. The narrative, however, as it stands is very incomplete. No indication is given as to the motive of their conduct. Duhm supposes that the emancipation rested simply on political grounds, and had nothing to do with the Law or religion. During the siege the slaves were of no use to the inhabitants, since they would normally be engaged in the fields outside the walls, and now that the city was invested they were a burden on the food-supply. By their action they had fewer useless mouths to feed, and perhaps enlisted some more free fter that the king Zedekiah had made a covenant with

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nen for the defence of the city. When the siege was raised the vork in the fields could be resumed, so that the slaves again ecame of service. The impression made by the narrative, however, is not that emancipation was purely prudential and selfish, ut that in itself it was a boon to the slaves, which on Duhm's nterpretation it could hardly have been. It is much more probable hat it was intended as such, not of course out of disinterested notives, but because by such a costly surrender the masters hoped o win the help of Yahweh against Babylon. When the siege was aised, they thought, with characteristic optimism, that the danger was over, and there was no need to leave their former slaves in njoyment of their liberty now that the granting of it had secured what they wanted.

The denunciation of their conduct in 13 ff. creates a difficulty, in that it connects the release of the slaves with the law that Hebrew slaves were to be released in the seventh year (Exod. xxi. 2, Deut. xv. 12). But this law seems to be irrelevant to the action here recorded. For the law provided for release at the end of six years dating from the beginning of the individual's servitude, so that there was no fixed point of time when all the slaves would be released, but the occasion for release might fall at any time. But the act of which we read in this chapter was a simultaneous emancipation of all the Hebrew slaves, quite irrespective of the term of service. Now it is quite probable that the law had for a considerable time been disregarded, and that many had been in servitude for longer than six years. But it is also probable that the term fixed by the law had in many cases not expired. It is therefore a plausible inference that the reference to the law is due to an editor. It is possible, however, that the emancipation was undertaken in obedience to the neglected law; and that to make their action even more effective, and perhaps atone for their earlier disregard, they decided to emancipate all their slaves without waiting till the legal term had expired. A death-bed repentance, with the usual sequel on recovery!

xxxiv. 8–11. Zedekiah made a covenant with the people of Jerusalem to release their Hebrew slaves. The princes and people agreed and released them, but afterwards re-enslaved them.

12–16. Jeremiah reminds them that their fathers had disobeyed the law bidding them release their Hebrew slaves in the seventh year; they had themselves, however, made a covenant in the Temple before Yahweh to let the slaves go free, and then brought them back into bondage.

17–22. Since then they have disobeyed His command to set their brethren free, Yahweh will set them free to fall a prey to sword, plague, and famine, and make them a consternation to all

all the people which were at Jerusalem, to proclaim
9 liberty unto them; that every man should let his man-
servant, and every man his maidservant, being an Hebrew
or an Hebrewess, go free; that none should serve him-
10 self of them, *to wit,* of a Jew his brother: and all the

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nations. And those who made the covenant, by cutting the calf in twain and passing between the pieces, shall be given up to their enemies; and their carcasses shall be food for bird and beast. And Zedekiah and his princes will be given to the Babylonian army. For though it has left Jerusalem Yahweh will bring it back, and it will capture and burn the city.

xxxiv. 8. The verse gives the date of the oracle inexactly, for it was after the breach of faith had been committed that Jeremiah's denunciation was uttered.

to proclaim liberty unto them. 'Unto them' should probably be omitted, as by LXX. The reference should be to the people, but apparently the sense is not that the proclamation of release should be communicated to the people, but that freedom should be announced to the slaves. The word rendered 'liberty' is unusual, and is not found in the earliest legislation or in Deuteronomy, though in Lev. xxv. 10 it is employed with reference to the year of Jubilee: see also Ezek. xlvi. 17, Isa. lxi. 1.

9. The number of Hebrew slaves is explained by the conditions of the time. The old peasant proprietors had been largely exterminated in the wars; the heavy tribute and taxation had ruined the poorer people; wealth had accumulated in comparatively few hands, and had been employed in luxury and other barren expenditure; so that the poor, seeing no alternative but starvation, had been forced to sell their children and then themselves into slavery. In the earlier period the relation between masters and slaves seems to have been friendly and humane; but in the capitalist era which had supervened, class distinctions would be aggravated and the old personal ties would to a large extent have given place to the point of view we associate with slavery.

that none . . . his brother. The clause is very clumsy in the Hebrew. The LXX gives 'so that no one of Judah should any more be a slave.'

10, 11. Here also the LXX has a briefer text: 'And all the princes and all the people, which had entered into the covenant that every one should let his manservant and every one his maidservant go free, turned and brought them into subjection for manservants and maidservants.' It is a moot question whether this represents a more original text than the Hebrew, since it is

princes and all the people obeyed, which had entered
into the covenant, that every one should let his man-
servant, and every one his maidservant, go free, that
none should serve themselves of them any more; they
obeyed, and let them go: but afterwards they turned, 11
and caused the servants and the handmaids, whom they
had let go free, to return, and brought them into sub-
jection for servants and for handmaids: therefore the 12
word of the LORD came to Jeremiah from the LORD,
saying, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: I made 13
a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought
them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of
[a] bondage, saying, At the end of seven years ye shall let 14
go every man his brother that is an Hebrew, which
[b] hath been sold unto thee, and hath served thee six
years, thou shalt let him go free from thee: but your
fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their

[a] Heb. *bondmen*. [b] Or, *hath sold himself*

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possible to explain the omission in the LXX by the passing of the scribe's eye from 'free' in 10 to 'free' in 11 (so Giesebrecht); or, assuming that the Greek text is the original, the change of 'turned' at the beginning of 10 into 'obeyed' may have occasioned the expansion into the present Hebrew text (so Duhm, Cornill). The latter is perhaps the more probable.

13, 14. The law is quoted, though freely, according to the form in Deuteronomy (xv. 12) rather than the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxi. 2), and the time designation 'at the end of seven years' seems to come from Deut. xv. 1 which introduces a law on a different subject, 'the year of release.' It is interesting that the Deuteronomic Law can be referred to as given on the day that Israel left Egypt (see note on vii. 22).

13. I made. The pronoun is emphatic. There is a contrast with the emphatic pronoun 'ye' at the beginning of 15.

14. At the end of seven years: cf. Deut. xv. 1 (see above). We should say at the end of six years, since this is clearly indicated in the course of the verse. The LXX reads 'six,' and may, of course, be right in doing so; but other examples may be quoted from the Old Testament of a similar usage to what we find here; just as the French say 'quinze jours' for our 'fourteen days.'

15 ear. And ye were now turned, and had done that which
is right in mine eyes, in proclaiming liberty every man
to his neighbour; and ye had made a covenant before
16 me in the house which is called by my name: but ye
turned and profaned my name, and caused every man
his servant, and every man his handmaid, whom ye had
let go free at their pleasure, to return; and ye brought
them into subjection, to be unto you for servants and
17 for handmaids. Therefore thus saith the LORD: Ye have
not hearkened unto me, to proclaim liberty, every man
to his brother, and every man to his neighbour: behold,
I proclaim unto you a liberty, saith the LORD, to the
sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine; and I will
make you to be [a] tossed to and fro among all the kingdoms
18 of the earth. And I will give the men that have trans-

[a] †Or, *a terror unto*

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17. Now follows the sentence. They have been disobedient to Yahweh in not emancipating their slaves at His bidding; therefore He emancipates them, dismisses them from His service. But they will not be masterless; sword, pestilence, and famine will be their new masters. For the closing words of the verse see note on xv. 4.

18–20. The text is inexact and redundant; it is probably to some extent in disorder and disturbed by glosses. The LXX has a briefer text. Duhm strikes out a good deal, including all reference to the calf. If, however, there is anything in the passage which is authentic, it is the reference to the ceremony of passing between the pieces of the calf. Duhm quite unwarrantably rejects the representation that the agreement to emancipate the slaves was placed under the sanction of religion. Certainly the disavowal of the proclamation would have been very reprehensible had it been merely a civil act; but it gave a still darker colour to it that they had placed their oath under the protection of their God (15) and ratified it by an ancient religious rite. It is very difficult to believe that any editor is responsible for this valuable piece of information. The precise restoration of the passage is a matter of much less moment; Giesebrecht reconstructs 18, 19 as follows: 'And I will give up the men that passed between the parts of the calf, the princes of Judah and the princes of Jerusalem, the

gressed my covenant, which have not performed the words
of the covenant which they made before me, [a] when they
cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof;
the princes of Judah, and the princes of Jerusalem, the 19
eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land,
which passed between the parts of the calf; I will even 20
give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the
hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies
shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to
the beasts of the earth. And Zedekiah king of Judah 21
and his princes will I give into the hand of their enemies,
and into the hand of them that seek their life, and into

[a] Heb. *the calf which they cut &c.*

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eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people.' The ceremony is familiar to us from Gen. xv. 10, where we read that Abraham divided the heifer, the she-goat, and the ram in two, and laid each half opposite each other, and when the sun went down 'a smoking furnace and a flaming torch' passed between the pieces (17), Yahweh thus making a covenant with the patriarch. The significance of the ceremony is often supposed to be that the contracting parties invoked on themselves the fate which had befallen the victims if they broke the covenant (cf. 1 Sam. xi. 7). But the essence of the rite is the cutting of the victim in two pieces and passing between them, and this is not very relevant to such an imprecation. It is more probably a mystical rite: the parties to the covenant are united by being taken within the life of the same sacred victim. It is thus allied to a covenant sacrifice in which the parties eat of the same victim, or to the less attenuated rite of blood-licking, in which the union is directly reciprocal and not mediated through a third party.

18. my covenant: i.e. the Deuteronomic Law previously mentioned; 'the covenant,' i.e. the agreement to emancipate the Hebrew slaves.

when they cut the calf. The margin gives the literal translation of the Hebrew text, which can hardly be right. The R.V. text implies a slight transposition.

20. and into the hand of them that seek their life. Probably to be omitted, with the LXX, both here and in the following verse.

21. The incidental reference to the raising of the siege is obviously authentic; it supplies the explanation of the breach of faith, which is strangely omitted in the narrative itself.

the hand of the king of Babylon's army, which are gone
22 up from you. Behold, I will command, saith the LORD, and cause them to return to this city; and they shall fight against it, and take it, and burn it with fire: and I will make the cities of Judah a desolation, without inhabitant.

35 The word which came unto Jeremiah from the LORD

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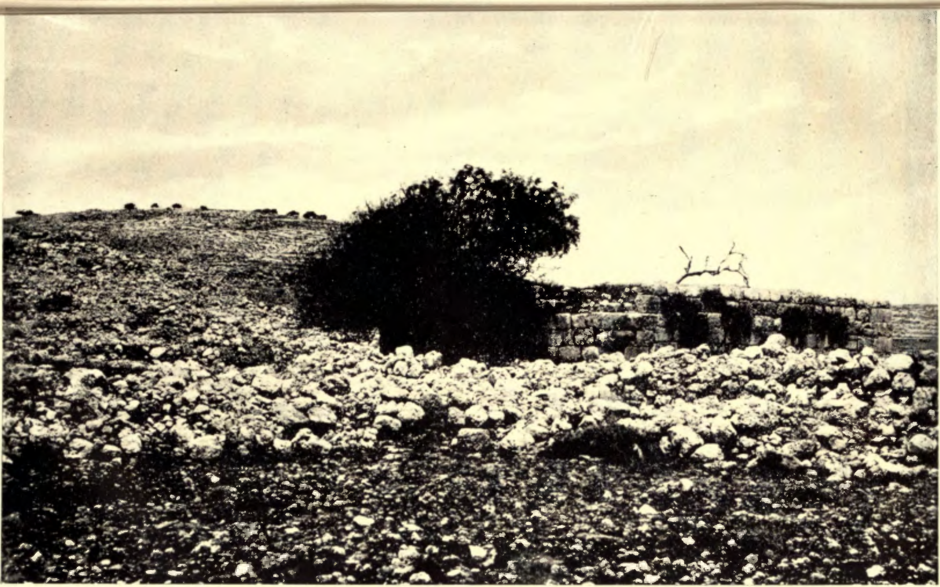
22. As they have caused their slaves to return (11), so Yahweh will cause their besiegers to return and consummate the destruction of the city.

XXXV. THE FIDELITY OF THE RECHABITES AND THE DISOBEDIENCE OF THE JEWS.

In this chapter we are suddenly transported to the reign of Jehoiakim, if we can trust the evidence of the title. Erbt rejects it, and dates the incident in the reign of Zedekiah. It is in favour of this view that the historical situation requires a date after Jehoiakim's rebellion against Babylon, since it was the Babylonian and Syrian armies which had compelled the Rechabites to come into Jerusalem (11: cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 2). The incident accordingly falls some years after the burning of the roll and Jehoiakim's attempt to have the prophet arrested. It is argued that so long as Jehoiakim was on the throne it would have been unsafe for Jeremiah to come out of hiding (xxxvi. 19, 26). But probably the king, after an interval, had decided to carry the matter no further (see vol. i, p. 20). The reference to the Syrian army suits the reign of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 2), and we should probably accept this as the true date and assign it to 598 B. C. or thereabouts.

This narrative gives us our fullest information about the Rechabites. They were a branch of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55); and from the account given of Jonadab their ancestor, we can see that he was a zealous sympathizer with Jehu, who destroyed the house of Ahab with atrocious bloodshed. His sympathy was enlisted, since he was a fanatic for what he took to be the pure worship of Yahweh. Some scholars consider that the worship of Yahweh was originally derived from the Kenites, among whom Moses dwelt after his flight from Egypt. The religion of Israel, which was at first a wilderness religion, was profoundly transformed by the settlement in Canaan. The nomad became a tiller of the soil. He learnt the art of agriculture from the Canaanites. This included not merely the right mode of cultivating the land, but also the right mode of winning the favour of the supernatural powers who



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in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah,

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could grant or withhold their blessing on his toil. Each district had its Baal, and success in agriculture was dependent on the favour of these local Baalim. The Hebrews combined the worship of the Baalim with that of Yahweh, without feeling that they were thereby compromising their duty of sole allegiance to their national God. Yahweh and the Baalim did not stand for them on the same plane, any more than many monotheists would feel that God and the saints were on the same plane, though both might be objects of worship. There was, however, a radical distinction between Yahweh and the Baalim, in that the cult of the latter was associated with revolting licentiousness. Moreover, owing to the fact that the term 'baal' meant 'lord' or 'owner,' it could be, and was, used quite innocently of Yahweh Himself. And, as time went on, the Hebrews began to think of Yahweh as the lord of the land and the giver of fertility. These two factors combined to contaminate with the foul rites of Baalism the worship of Yahweh Himself. At last a definite protest was made by Jonadab the son of Rechab. He strictly forbade his descendants to abandon the nomad life. They were not to build houses but to dwell in tents, they were to sow no seed and to plant no vineyard, and they were not even to drink wine. It is quite a mistake to suppose that the main stress was laid on total abstinence from intoxicating drinks, or that their movement was a protest against luxury. It was a protest against adopting the agricultural life, since this was in their judgement incompatible with perfect loyalty to their wilderness God, Yahweh. They could have been total abstainers and yet lived in houses and planted fields; nor, had they manufactured mead and drunk it, would they have been disloyal to the Rechabite ideal. More than two centuries had passed since Jonadab had laid his commands on his family, and during this period they had been faithfully observed. Only invasion had driven them to leave the open country for the security of the city. (See further on the subject of this paragraph the editor's *The Religion of Israel*, chap. ii, 'The Settlement in Canaan and Transformation of the Religion.')

The historical character of the incident itself is generally admitted. Schmidt constitutes an exception among recent writers. 'That Jeremiah should have praised for their loyalty the Rechabites whose very presence in Jerusalem constituted the severest infringement of the commandment enjoined upon them by their ancestor is quite incredible, apart from the questionable method used to test their fidelity to one of the ancestral injunctions, and the scene of this trial' (*Enc. Bib.* 2387). But it is a pure assumption that their presence in Jerusalem infringed the command of Jonadab, since they might still have pitched their tents within the walls. And

2 saying, Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the LORD,

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even if it had been, we may remember that the Maccabees, whose whole movement was inspired by fidelity to the Law, were nevertheless forced by the logic of bitter experience to fight on the Sabbath, though to maintain its sanctity was one of their most cherished desires (1 Macc. ii. 29-41). There was nothing really questionable, as Cheyne also urges with Schmidt, about Jeremiah's invitation to the Rechabites, provided he was well assured, as he would be, that it would certainly be refused. And no real difficulty is raised as to the place. Schmidt says that probably the story was intended to justify the elevation into some position in the lower clerus of those who had abandoned the nomadic life they were solemnly commanded to lead (ibid.). He thinks that the chapter may have originated in the Persian period, as the reorganization of the clerus would raise many questions of eligibility (loc. cit., 2391). That some Rechabites may not have remained faithful to the nomadic ideal is suggested, though not proved, by Neh. iii. 14, where we are told that Malchijah, the son of Rechab, participated in the repair of the gates of Jerusalem. Nor is the evidence that the Rechabites were incorporated in the lower ranks of the clergy at all strong. We have no solid reason for doubting the historical character of the story, but on the contrary we may readily recognize the presence in it of many features which cannot have been invented.

xxxv. 1-11. Yahweh commanded me in the days of Jehoiakim to take the Rechabites to a chamber in the Temple and give them wine. So I brought them there, and offered them wine. But they refused it, for Jonadab ben-Rechab, their ancestor, had commanded them not to drink wine, build houses, sow seed or plant vineyards, or possess any of these things, but to dwell in tents. They had strictly observed his commands, and had come to dwell in Jerusalem only because of the armies of the Chaldeans and the Syrians.

12-19. Yahweh bids the prophet ask the Jews if they will not receive the lesson. Jonadab's injunctions are obeyed, but the Jews have not paid heed to Yahweh or His prophets. So all the threatened evil will come on the Jews for their disobedience, but since the Rechabites have obeyed the behests of Jonadab, he shall not want a man to stand before Yahweh for ever.

xxxv. 1. in the days of Jehoiakim. On the correctness of this and the more precise date see the Introduction to the chapter (p. 144).

2. the house of the Rechabites: not the dwelling-house in which they were living, but the family, as in 3, 5, 18.

into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.
Then I took Jaazaniah the son of Jeremiah, the son of 3
Habazziniah, and his brethren, and all his sons, and the
whole house of the Rechabites; and I brought them into 4
the house of the LORD, into the chamber of the sons of
Hanan the son of Igdaliah, the man of God, which was
by the chamber of the princes, which was above the
chamber of Maaseiah the son of Shallum, the keeper of

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the chambers. Of such chambers in the Temple courts there were many, used partly as storerooms, partly as official residences, partly for gatherings, especially no doubt for sacrificial feasts. They might be open or closed; Baruch was able to read the roll in the ears of all the people, while he was in the chamber of Gemariah. Here also we may assume that the chamber was open, since the lesson would be lost on the people, unless they were spectators of the scene. We may also conclude that it must have been a spacious room.

3. It is noteworthy that the names, one of which is identical with that of the prophet himself, are like that of Jonadab, all compounded with Yahweh. Jaazaniah was presumably the head of the clan.

4. The precision with which the situation of the chamber is described vouches for the historicity of the narrative. The Temple itself was destroyed not so long after.

the sons of Hanan. We do not know anything of Hanan, except that he was a 'man of God,' and the sense of this is not certain; he was perhaps a prophet. His 'sons' may have been literally such, or possibly his disciples; and from the fact that they placed their room at Jeremiah's disposal we may gather that they were in sympathy with him.

Igdaliah. The LXX and Syriac read Gedaliah, which should perhaps be adopted. It need hardly be said that this Gedaliah is not to be identified with the governor who was appointed by Nebuchadnezzar after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Maaseiah: probably to be identified with the father of Zephaniah the priest (cf. xxi. 1, xxix. 25, xxxvii. 3). He was 'the keeper of the door' or more correctly of the threshold, to which great sanctity was attached in antiquity (see Trumbull's *The Threshold Covenant*). From lii. 24 (= 2 Kings xxv. 18) we learn that there were three of these functionaries; apparently they ranked after the second priest.

5 the [a] door: and I set before the sons of the house of the
Rechabites bowls full of wine, and cups, and I said unto
6 them, Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink no
wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor
7 your sons, for ever: neither shall ye build house, nor sow
seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days
ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the
8 land wherein ye sojourn. And we have obeyed the voice
of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he
charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives,
9 our sons, nor our daughters; nor to build houses for us to
dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:
10 but we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done

[a] Heb. *threshold.*

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5. The **bowls** were large vessels, from which the wine would be served into the **cups.**

6. Jonadab the son of Rechab. We meet with him in 2 Kings x. 15, 16, 23. Jehu found in him a hearty sympathizer in the atrocities with which he extirpated the house of Ahab and the worship of the Tyrian Baal, Melkart. Jonadab was no doubt inspired simply by a 'zeal for Yahweh' which Jehu indeed claimed, though in his case ambition was only too evident. It must, of course, be remembered that the worship of the Tyrian Baal stood on quite a different footing from the worship of the local Baalim, since it involved the recognition of a foreign deity as standing on the same level as Yahweh. But an ardent Yahweh-worshipper like Jonadab would naturally be vehemently opposed to the cult of the Baalim and the worship of Melkart; both infringed the monopoly of Yahweh. For the meaning of the prohibitions see the Introduction to this chapter. A close parallel is quoted by Graf and others from Diodorus Siculus (xix. 94), who says with reference to the Nabataeans: 'They have a law, neither to sow corn, nor plant any fruit-bearing plant, nor to use wine, nor to build a dwelling-house.' The reason assigned, however, was the preservation of freedom from subjugation. The penalty for violation of the law was death. Bennett quotes from Scott's *Legend of Montrose*, 'Son of the Mist! be free as thy forefathers. Own no lord—receive no law—take no hire—give no stipend—build no hut—enclose no pasture—sow no grain.'

according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.
But it came to pass, when Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came up into the land, that we said, Come, and let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians; so we dwell at Jerusalem. 11

Then came the word of the LORD unto Jeremiah, saying, 12
Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Go, and 13
say to the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words?
saith the LORD. The words of Jonadab the son of 14
Rechab, that he commanded his sons, not to drink wine,
are performed, and unto this day they drink none, for they
obey their father's commandment: but I have spoken
unto you, rising up early and speaking; and ye have not
hearkened unto me. I have sent also unto you all my 15
servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them,
saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and
amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve
them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given
to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your
ear, nor hearkened unto me. Forasmuch as the sons of 16

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11. Cf. 2 Kings xxiv. 2.

12. The narrative suggests that the interview with the Rechabites ended at this point, and that Jeremiah then received the Divine message and was told to go and deliver it to the people. But no special revelation was needed to enforce the lesson of the scene which had just been enacted; and its effect would have been largely lost if there and then he had not driven it home. The address which follows is largely of the conventional type. Erbt probably goes too far in leaving 16, 19 as its only authentic portion, but it seems to have suffered considerable editorial expansion. For 13 cf. ii. 30, vii. 28, xvii. 23, xxxii. 33; for 14^b cf. vii. 13, xi. 7, xxxii. 33; for 15 cf. vii. 3, 7, 25, 26, xi. 8, xviii. 11, xxv. 3-7, xxvi. 5, xxix. 19, xxxiv. 14; for 17 cf. xix. 15.

Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father which he commanded them, but
17 this people hath not hearkened unto me; therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have
18 not answered. And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done
19 according unto all that he commanded you; therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever

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18, 19. The LXX diverges a good deal from the Hebrew: Duhm and Cornill prefer the former, but consider it a late insertion; Giesebrecht prefers the latter. The LXX reads 'Wherefore thus saith Yahweh, Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have obeyed the command of their father, and done as their father has commanded, there shall never fail a man to the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab to stand before me all the days of the earth.'

19. Jonadab . . . for ever. 'To stand before Yahweh' means to minister to Him. It is used with reference to Jeremiah himself (xv. 19: see note); to Moses and Samuel, as powerful in intercession. But it is specially used of priestly and Levitical functions. It would be too much to infer with any confidence that the passage is intended to justify the incorporation of some of the Rechabites into the ranks of the inferior clergy (see the Introduction to this chapter). It is true that we meet with a reference in Hegesippus' account of the martyrdom of James to 'one of the priests of the sons of Rechab, the son of Rechabim, who are mentioned by Jeremiah the prophet' (*Hist. Eccl.* ii. 23), but it is questionable if much weight can be attached to this. For identifications with descendants of the Rechabites by Benjamin of Tudela, Wolff, Pierotti, and others, the Bible Dictionaries may be consulted.

And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the **36**

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xxxvi. The Writing, Public Reading, and Burning of the Roll.

We now approach one of the most noteworthy chapters of the book, since it gives us very important information as to the origin of Jeremiah's prophecies in their written form. We have already discussed it in the Introduction to the Commentary (vol. i, pp. 57–62), and need not here repeat what was said there. It may be added that Prof. Condamin has devoted an excellent article to this chapter, in the periodical entitled *Études* (issued by the Society of Jesus) for Jan. 5, 1911. This contains an annotated translation, and a discussion of the problems presented by the chapter.

xxxvi. 1–8. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim Yahweh bade Jeremiah write all the words spoken to him concerning Jerusalem, Judah, and the nations from the time of his call, for Judah may on hearing them amend and be forgiven. So Baruch wrote them at his dictation. And since the prophet was prevented from entering the Temple, he told Baruch to read the roll to the people assembled in the Temple for a fast day, in the hope that they might entreat Yahweh and amend their ways, in view of His terrible threatening. So Baruch did as Jeremiah ordered him.

9–20. In the fifth year of Jehoiakim and the ninth month there was a fast, and Baruch read the roll to the people. Micaiah, having heard it read, went to the palace and told all the princes the contents of the roll. The princes sent Jehudi to bring Baruch with the roll. On his arrival he read it at their request. When they had heard it they were afraid, and told him that they must report the matter to the king. They asked him how he had written it, and he answered that it was at Jeremiah's dictation. They warned him that he and Jeremiah should go into hiding. Then they went to the king, leaving the roll behind them, and made their report to him.

21–26. The king sent Jehudi for the roll, and Jehudi read it to him and the princes in attendance. Whenever he had finished reading three or four columns, the king cut them with a penknife and burnt them on a brasier, and continued doing so till the roll was completely burnt. And no one was terror-stricken, though some vainly entreated the king not to burn the roll. Then he ordered Baruch and Jeremiah to be arrested, but Yahweh hid them.

27–32. Then Jeremiah was commanded to take another roll and rewrite the prophecies. And he must tell Jehoiakim, who had burnt the roll because it announced the destruction of the land by the king of Babylon, that he should have none to sit on the throne; his dead body should be flung forth unburied; he, his seed, and

son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came unto
2 Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee,

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his servants should be punished; they and all the people should suffer the evil that had been threatened. So Baruch wrote on another roll the words of the roll that had been burnt, and added many similar words.

xxxvi. 1. On the date see note on xxv. 1.

2. Graf has argued elaborately that up to this time Jeremiah had committed none of his prophecies to writing. Since he admits that he could not have reproduced his early prophecies from memory, he thinks that it is only the substance rather than the precise form which was reproduced, a task all the easier that the substance of his message was unaltered, and more suited to the practical purpose it was intended to serve than if he had exactly repeated the oracles directed to a different set of circumstances. But the actual phenomena of the book do not bear out Graf's view. Several of the early prophecies bear so unmistakably the marks of the time when they were originally uttered, and are so full of the prophet's youthful energy and fire, that we cannot regard them as compositions of some twenty years later. We should probably infer that Jeremiah had preserved in written form some of his oracles, but that in dictating to Baruch he did not feel himself bound to a literal reproduction when it seemed desirable to alter or expand to suit the new conditions. Stade's view that Jeremiah experienced a repetition of the prophetic ecstasy in which the prophecies were originally spoken, in order to repeat the oracles themselves, is quite unnecessary and unsupported by any tangible evidence.

against Israel. This can hardly be correct. The roll was of a threatening character, designed to bring Judah to repentance. What Jeremiah had said of the northern tribes was in the nature of promise, and was therefore unsuitable for the purpose of the roll as described in 3. We should read, with the LXX, 'Jerusalem' in place of 'Israel.' 'Against' is probably the best rendering, though we might translate 'concerning.'

and against all the nations. Duhm and Rothstein consider this an addition, later than xxv, and perhaps than xlvi–li. But this is quite arbitrary, resting on the theory we have already seen occasion to reject (vol. i, pp. 77, 78), that Jeremiah was not a prophet to the nations.

from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. It may be 3
that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which
I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every
man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity
and their sin. Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of 4
Neriah; and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah
all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him,
upon a roll of a book. And Jeremiah commanded 5
Baruch, saying, I am [a] shut up; I cannot go into the house
of the LORD: therefore go thou, and read in the roll, 6

[a] †Or, *restrained*

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3. Cf. xxvi. 3.

4. Baruch has appeared already in xxxii. 12. He was probably a secretary by profession, and a faithful adherent of the prophet. He seems to have been of high standing socially. He was the grandson of Maaseiah, who is described in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8 as the governor of the city, and the brother of Seraiah, who, according to li. 59, held an official position (what position is not clear: see the note), and went to Babylon on a mission in the reign of Zedekiah.

from the mouth of Jeremiah: i. e. at Jeremiah's dictation, but whether Jeremiah read any part of it or spoke entirely without manuscript is not indicated by this phrase.

5. I am shut up. This is a very unfortunate translation, since it suggests that Jeremiah was imprisoned, though it is clear from 19 that this was not the case. Several think that he could not enter the Temple on account of some ceremonial impurity. This is perhaps favoured by the term employed; but it is unlikely, since the actual reading did not take place till late in the following year (see 9), and it is unreasonable to suppose that the writing of the roll occupied the greater part of this interval; nor have we any suggestion elsewhere that Jeremiah suffered from any long-standing condition of this kind. At a later period in the reign he took the Rechabites to the Temple (xxxv), and was therefore free at that time from any such disability. It is more likely that the exclusion from the Temple is to be connected with the incident recorded in xx–xxi. 6. The authorities had probably forbidden him to speak there again. If we could place 9 before this verse, there would be no difficulty in the other view, since it might happen that on the fast day Jeremiah was in a condition of ceremonial uncleanness. But this would be a somewhat arbitrary expedient.

6. It is not clear whether we should read 'on the fast day' or

which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people in the LORD's house upon [a] the fast day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears
7 of all Judah that come out of their cities. It may be [b] they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this
8 people. And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

9 Now it came to pass in the fifth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, in the ninth month, that all the people in Jerusalem, and all the people that came from

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[a] †Or, *a fast day* [b] Heb. *their supplication will fall.*

'on a fast day;' but from the statement in 9 we gather that it was not a fixed fast day, but one specially appointed on which the reading took place. If the verses are in the right order, the margin is accordingly to be preferred. Jeremiah chose a fast day on account of the large numbers that would be collected from the cities of Judah as well as from the capital, and the chastened and more receptive mood in which the people would be.

7. If their supplication falls before Yahweh (see margin), He will be constrained to take notice of it.

for great . . . this people: cf. 2 Kings xxii. 13, Josiah's words when he heard the book of the Law read.

8. This verse gives in summary form what is told at length in the following verses.

9. For **the fifth year** the LXX reads 'the eighth year,' which has not the slightest claim to acceptance. The delay till the fifth year is difficult enough to understand, but that the reading should be postponed three years longer is quite incredible. The ninth month was a winter month, embracing parts of November and December; the weather was often cold (cf. 22) and wet (cf. Ezra x. 9).

all the people . . . proclaimed a fast. This is the more generally accepted rendering, though some (including Rothstein and Condamin) translate 'they summoned to a fast all the people.' This fast was apparently not held on a stated fast-day but was specially summoned, probably in connexion with the political situation.

the cities of Judah unto Jerusalem, proclaimed a fast before the LORD. Then read Baruch in the book the words 10
of Jeremiah in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah the son of Shaphan the scribe, in the upper court, at the entry of the new gate of the LORD's house, in
the ears of all the people. And when Micaiah the son of 11
Gemariah, the son of Shaphan, had heard out of the book
all the words of the LORD, he went down into the king's 12
house, into the scribe's chamber: and, lo, all the princes sat there, even Elishama the scribe, and Delaiah the son of Shemaiah, and Elnathan the son of Achbor, and

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10. The precision with which the locality is defined is evidence that the account proceeds from an eye-witness, no doubt Baruch. Gemariah was one of the sons of Shaphan, who held the very important post of secretary under Josiah, and read to him the Book of the Law which Hilkiah had discovered. If this Shaphan is to be identified with the Shaphan mentioned in xxvi. 24, Gemariah was the brother of Ahikam, Jeremiah's powerful protector, and uncle of Gedaliah. He was, we may assume, friendly to Jeremiah, since his chamber was placed at Baruch's disposal.

the upper court: probably to be identified with 'the inner court' mentioned in 1 Kings vi. 36, vii. 12. For 'the new gate' see note on xxvi. 10.

11. Micaiah had apparently been left in charge of Gemariah's chamber, while the owner was at the council of princes, if we are to identify the Gemariah in 10 with the Gemariah in 12. Possibly his father had instructed him to report to the council if anything should be said or done that called for official notice.

12. he went down: the palace being lower than the Temple; contrast xxvi. 10.

Elishama the scribe. If the designation 'the scribe' in 10 is to be attached to Gemariah, who would thus have succeeded his father Shaphan in the office, we should either have to suppose that he had been superseded by Elishama, or that there were two secretaries. More probably 'the scribe' in 10 is the designation of Shaphan, so that Gemariah, while a member of the council of princes, did not hold the post of secretary. The secretary's chamber was attached to the palace rather than the Temple, as is natural with a State official.

Elnathan the son of Achbor was sent by Jehoiakim to procure Uriah's extradition from Egypt. (The note on xxvi. 22 should be consulted.)

Gemariah the son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah the son of
13 Hananiah, and all the princes. Then Micaiah declared
unto them all the words that he had heard, when Baruch
14 read the book in the ears of the people. Therefore all
the princes sent Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, the son of
Shelemiah, the son of Cushi, unto Baruch, saying, Take
in thine hand the roll wherein thou hast read in the ears
of the people, and come. So Baruch the son of Neriah
15 took the roll in his hand, and came unto them. And they

Gemariah the son of Shaphan: probably (though some question this) to be identified with the Gemariah of 10.

all the princes: i. e. all the other princes. It is curious that the same phrase should be used twice in the same sentence with a different application.

14. Jehudi . . . Cushi. It is very surprising that a subordinate official should have his ancestry mentioned back for three generations. It is rare for even the grandfather to be mentioned, though it might be done, as in the case of Micaiah (11), where the grandfather was a person of distinction, or perhaps to avoid confusion where several bore the same name. It is noteworthy in this case that the first and last are not individual but national names, 'Jew' and 'Cushite.' Hitzig infers that Cushi was an Ethiopian who had been naturalized as a Jew; his son and grandson bore names compounded with Yahweh, expressing their adhesion to His service; but only in the next generation was full Jewish citizenship possible, and this is expressed in the name Jehudi. This view is accepted by several scholars. On the other hand, the name Cushi is found in the genealogy of the prophet Zephaniah (Zeph. i. 1), though he can hardly have been a foreigner since he was the grandson of Hezekiah, probably the king of that name (this accounts for his genealogy going back to the great-grandfather). Duhm supposes that names of this kind are to be explained by circumstances. Cushi might be given to a son born during a journey to Ethiopia, or born of an Ethiopian mother; Jehudi to a son born after the father's return, to distinguish him from sons born abroad, or to distinguish the son of a Jewish mother from half-brothers born of a foreign mother. Cornill and Rothstein prefer to read 'Jehudi the son of Nethaniah, and Shelemiah the son of Cushi.' The alteration to our present text is thought to have been occasioned by the reflection that one messenger alone was wanted, and that in 21 Jehudi alone was sent. There is no evidence, however, to support this change of text, and the sending of two messengers is improbable.

said unto him, Sit down now, and read it in our ears. So
Baruch read it in their ears. Now it came to pass, when 16
they had heard all the words, they turned in fear one
toward another, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell
the king of all these words. And they asked Baruch, 17
saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words
at his mouth? Then Baruch answered them, He pro- 18
nounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and
I wrote them with ink in the book. Then said the 19
princes unto Baruch, Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah;

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15. Sit down. The courteous treatment accorded to Baruch is noteworthy. Some follow the LXX in pointing the word differently, rendering 'Read it again in our ears.' But this is to be rejected.

16. The princes are terrified at the contents of the roll, and feel that they must let the king know. Omit 'unto Baruch,' with the LXX; the words express the result of their deliberations among themselves.

17. at his mouth. These words should probably be omitted, with the LXX; they anticipate Baruch's answer.

18. Baruch's answer is intended to assure the princes that the whole roll was word for word Jeremiah's composition; he had simply performed the mechanical task of taking down the oracles as the prophet dictated them. It is remarkable that Jeremiah's name is not mentioned here, though in a formal statement of this kind it would be expected. We should read, with the LXX and Syriac, 'Jeremiah pronounced.'

with ink. The LXX omits the words, which occur here only, probably incorrectly. The detail would seem to Baruch worth mentioning. Giesebrecht reads 'with my hand;' Duhm's scoff that the princes would know that he had not written it with his foot is hypercritical, for Baruch might quite well have said 'I wrote them with my own hand,' to bring out that he alone had executed the mechanical part of the task (cf. Gal. vi. 11). But there is no need to alter the text.

19. The princes know the king too well, they had the fate of Uriah before them, to be in any doubt as to the reception he would accord to the prophet and his secretary. So they give Baruch timely warning that he and Jeremiah should go into hiding. It is a little remarkable that the king did not issue the order for their arrest as soon as the princes made their report, before he had the roll read to him.

20 and let no man know where ye be. And they went in to
the king into the court; but they had laid up the roll in
the chamber of Elishama the scribe; and they told all the
21 words in the ears of the king. So the king sent Jehudi to
fetch the roll: and he took it out of the chamber of
Elishama the scribe. And Jehudi read it in the ears of
the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood
22 beside the king. Now the king sat in the winter house
in the ninth month: and *there was a fire in* the brasier
23 burning before him. And it came to pass, when Jehudi
had read three or four [a] leaves, that *the king* cut it with

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[a] †Or, *columns*

20. the court: i. e. the inner court. But this would be open, whereas according to 22 the king was in the winter house. Rothstein and Giesebrecht independently suggested 'into the cabinet,' which involves very slight change. This is accepted by Duhm and Cornill (see also Driver's note).

they had laid up the roll: probably hoping that the king might not ask for it, being content with the oral report they were going to make to him.

22. The fact that he was in the winter house is mentioned to account for the fire in the brasier, which plays so important a part in the story. The LXX rightly omits 'in the ninth month;' it is a gloss introduced from 9, to explain why the king was in the winter house sitting before the fire. The sense of the last clause is correctly given in the R.V., but, as the italics suggest, the Hebrew is unsatisfactory. It is, in fact, ungrammatical; the alteration of one letter (*'eth* into *'esh*, 'fire') gives the requisite sense. The brasier was placed in the middle of the room.

23. The R.V. does not bring out the meaning. It suggests that Jehudi read three or four leaves, and then, without hearing more, the king cut the whole roll to pieces and burned it. But 24 implies that the king heard the whole roll read. Driver's rendering brings out the sense, 'as often as Jehudi read three or four columns, he cut them.' Had he burnt the whole roll at once the knife would have been less necessary, since the roll could have been tossed on the fire as it was, unless indeed it was too large to burn readily in that way. As every three or four columns were read, he cut them off and burnt them and let the reading proceed. At the end of the process the whole roll was burned; the king found nothing to save from the fire.

the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was in the brasier, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was in the brasier. And they were not afraid, nor rent their 24
garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words. Moreover Elnathan and Delaiah 25
and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll: but he would not hear them.
And the king commanded Jerahmeel [a] the king's son, and 26
Seraiah the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet: but the LORD hid them.

Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, after 27

[a] Or, *the son of Hammelech*

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leaves. The margin **columns** is better. The word literally means 'doors.' A similar usage is found in Arabic and Rabbinical Hebrew.

the penknife: literally 'a scribe's knife.'

24. There is perhaps an intentional contrast with the conduct of Josiah when he heard the Law Book read (2 Kings xxii. 11).

25. On the attitude of Elnathan see note on xxvi. 22. The LXX inverts (with a difference in the names) the true sense of the verse.

26. the king's son: probably not the son of Jehoiakim, who was himself barely thirty at the time, but a prince of the blood.

but the LORD hid them. The LXX reads simply 'but they were hidden.' The Hebrew is finer; Baruch recognizes in these words that it was due to God's watchful care that their retreat was not discovered.

27–31. Duhm strikes out these verses as due to the redactor. Certainly, apart from the style, there are difficulties. The words of Jehoiakim in 29 were not really uttered by him to Jeremiah, since king and prophet did not meet. The prediction that he should have no successor on the throne was not absolutely true, since his son Jehoiachin did succeed him. But as he reigned only three months, and was then deposed and taken to Babylon, Jeremiah might well have expressed himself in this way; and the fact that it was not literally fulfilled tells against the view that it is an editorial insertion from xxii. 30. The quotation from the roll is not exact, but it agrees sufficiently with the tenor of Jeremiah's predictions. Erbt more moderately assigns 29–31 to an editor, Rothstein simply 29^{b}–30^{a} ('Thou hast burned . . . king of Judah').

that the king had burned the roll, and the words which
28 Baruch wrote at the mouth of Jeremiah, saying, Take
thee again another roll, and write in it all the former
words that were in the first roll, which Jehoiakim the
29 king of Judah hath burned. And concerning Jehoiakim
king of Judah thou shalt say, Thus saith the LORD:
Thou hast burned this roll, saying, Why hast thou written
therein, saying, The king of Babylon shall certainly come
and destroy this land, and shall cause to cease from
30 thence man and beast? Therefore thus saith the LORD
concerning Jehoiakim king of Judah: He shall have
none to sit upon the throne of David: and his dead
body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the
31 night to the frost. And I will punish him and his seed
and his servants for their iniquity; and I will bring upon
them, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and upon
the men of Judah, all the evil that I have pronounced
32 against them, but they hearkened not. Then took Jeremiah another roll, and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the
son of Neriah; who wrote therein from the mouth of
Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim
king of Judah had burned in the fire: and there were
added besides unto them many like words.

37 [R] And Zedekiah the son of Josiah reigned as king,

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30. On the closing threat see note on xxii. 18, 19 (vol. i, pp. 255–6).
32. On the second edition of the roll see vol i, pp. 61, 62.

xxxvii. 1–10. JEREMIAH WARNS ZEDEKIAH THAT THE CHALDEANS WILL RETURN AND BURN JERUSALEM.

This section gives us an account of a deputation sent by Zedekiah to Jeremiah in the interval of relief from the siege occasioned by the coming of the Egyptian army, and the reply the prophet sent to the king. The relation of this narrative to that in xxi has been discussed in the Introduction to that chapter, to which the reader should refer (vol. i, p. 246). Here it need simply be said that the nar-

instead of [a] Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, whom Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of
Judah. But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people 2
of the land, did hearken unto the words of the LORD,
which he spake by the prophet Jeremiah.

[B] And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of 3

[a] See ch. xxii. 24.

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ratives probably refer to different incidents, xxi to an earlier, xxxvii. 1–10 to a later stage in the conflict. The present story is quite trustworthy and comes to us from the hand of Baruch, but 1, 2 are presumably editorial, and 3–10 may have been touched by the editor's hand.

xxxvii. 1, 2. Zedekiah was appointed by Nebuchadrezzar king in place of Coniah, but neither he nor his people gave heed to the message of Jeremiah.

3–10. Zedekiah sent to Jeremiah to entreat his prayers. Jeremiah had not yet been imprisoned, and the news that an Egyptian army was coming had caused the Chaldeans to raise the siege of Jerusalem. Jeremiah sends the answer to the king that the Egyptian army will return to Egypt, while the Chaldeans shall return and burn Jerusalem. Let them not deceive themselves with the delusion that they will abandon the siege. Nay, though the whole army contained none but wounded men, they would rise up and burn the city.

xxxvii. 1, 2. It is surprising to find this mention of Zedekiah's accession at this point in the book, as if he had not been mentioned before. The editor wishes to warn the reader that in the following narratives he is not, as in xxxv, xxxvi, concerned with the reign of Jehoiakim. This may perhaps account for the reading in the LXX, 'instead of Jehoiakim,' the meaning being not necessarily that Zedekiah was his immediate successor, but in the narrative that now follows the king is not Jehoiakim but Zedekiah. If the Hebrew text is original, a scribe may have struck out 'Coniah and' on account of the statement a few verses earlier (xxxvi. 30) that Jehoiakim should have 'none to sit upon the throne.' The statement in 2 is not an appropriate introduction to the king's request for prayer in 3.

3. The request is like that made by Hezekiah to Isaiah (Isa. xxxvii. 2–5). There is this difference: Hezekiah sent when matters seemed most desperate; Zedekiah when the raising of the siege had brought a reprieve. The reply of Jeremiah seems irrelevant to the request. It is rather an answer to such a question as, What is the issue to be? Will the Chaldeans abandon their enterprise?

Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the
priest, to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto
4 the LORD our God for us. [**R**] Now Jeremiah came in
and went out among the people: for they had not put
5 him into prison. [**B**] And Pharaoh's army was come
forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they brake up
6 from Jerusalem. Then came the word of the LORD
7 unto the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD,
the God of Israel: Thus shall ye say to the king of
Judah, that sent you unto me to inquire of me; Behold,
Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall
8 return to Egypt into their own land. And the Chaldeans
shall come again, and fight against this city; and they
9 shall take it, and burn it with fire. Thus saith the

Possibly the prayer is understood to be an entreaty for direction rather than for deliverance, as 7 suggests; possibly the terms of the passage have been influenced by the account in Isa. xxxvii. 2–5. Jehucal appears a little later as one of Jeremiah's enemies (xxxviii. 1–6). On Zephaniah see notes on xxi. 2, xxix. 25. Erbt supposes that Jehucal has intruded into the text from xxxviii. 1, and that Pashhur has been transferred from xxxvii. 1 to xxxviii. 1. Thus we should have the same deputation as in xxi. 1. But if there were really two deputations, there is no reason why the members of it should have been the same. Jehucal's attitude in xxxviii. 1 is no warrant for removing his name here.

4. This verse may be editorial; in Baruch's memoirs the incidents would presumably be narrated in chronological order, so that it would be quite clear that the imprisonment had not yet occurred, whereas according to the present arrangement it is narrated in xxxii, xxxiii.

5. This comes at an inappropriate point: strictly it should have preceded 3. But the statement itself probably comes from Baruch. The Pharaoh mentioned is Pharaoh Hophra (590–571 B.C.); see note on xliv. 30.

7. We do not know why the Egyptian relief army retreated to Egypt. Perhaps it was intimidated at the approach of the Chaldeans, and yielded the ground without a struggle; perhaps, as Ezek. xxx. 21 suggests, it had suffered defeat.

9, 10. These verses are no mere addition made because the

LORD: Deceive not [a] yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. 10 For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained but [b] wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.

11 And it came to pass that when the army of the Chal-

[a] Heb. *your souls.* [b] Heb. *thrust through.*

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redactor cannot bring himself to stop. They are expressed in so striking a way, and so apt to the self-deceiving optimism of the Jews, that we may be well assured that Jeremiah spoke them. So certain is the return of the Chaldeans and the destruction of the city, that if the Jews had smitten the whole army of the enemy, and only some desperately wounded (see margin) soldiers were left, they would rise up and burn the city. We should probably connect 'every man in his tent' with 'wounded men,' strike out 'among them,' and read with the LXX 'yet should these rise up.' The point of 'every man in his tent' is perhaps that out of several inmates of a tent, only one survivor was left. All that had happened so far was a mere strategic retreat, and already the hopes of the Jews were rising high; but 'things are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be; why then should we deceive ourselves?' So settled in God's counsel is the city's fate, that even the most crushing defeat of its enemy could not save it from destruction at their hands.

xxxvii. 11–21. JEREMIAH IS ARRESTED AND IMPRISONED. ZEDEKIAH CONSULTS HIM AND AMELIORATES HIS LOT.

On this incident see vol. i, p. 25. The account is no doubt derived from Baruch's memoirs.

xxxvii. 11–15. When the Chaldeans had raised the siege of Jerusalem for fear of the relief army from Egypt, Jeremiah was going into the land of Benjamin, but was arrested by Irijah as a deserter to the enemy, in spite of his denial. The princes beat him and put him in prison.

16–21. After many days' confinement Zedekiah had him brought to the palace, and inquired if there was any message from Yahweh. Jeremiah told him that he should be delivered into Nebuchadrezzar's hands. He then remonstrated with him on account of his imprisonment, and pointed to the falsification of the predictions that the enemy would not come against Judah. He added a request that he should not be sent back to the prison to

deans was broken up from Jerusalem for fear of Pharaoh's
12 army, then Jeremiah went forth out of Jerusalem to go
into the land of Benjamin, to receive his portion [a] there,
13 in the midst of the people. And when he was in the
gate of Benjamin, a captain of the ward was there, whose
name was Irijah, the son of Shelemiah, the son of Hananiah; and he laid hold on Jeremiah the prophet, saying,
14 Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans. Then said Jeremiah,
It is false; I fall not away to the Chaldeans; but he
hearkened not to him: so Irijah laid hold on Jeremiah,

[a] Heb. *from thence.*

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die there. So the king had him removed to the court of the guard, and supplied with bread.

xxxvii. 11. The interruption of the siege made it possible for Jeremiah to undertake his journey.

12. The precise object of his journey is uncertain, since the meaning of the Hebrew is not clear, perhaps through textual corruption, perhaps through its use of technical language which does not occur elsewhere. The R.V. gives what is probably the sense. The journey may be connected with an earlier stage of the same business as is recorded in xxxii, or he may have wished to get more money than he had, though at a later time he still had some, as we learn from xxxii. 9.

13. As he was in 'the gate of Benjamin,' on the north side of the city which led into Benjamite territory, he was arrested by the officer on duty, Irijah, a grandson of Hananiah, who is probably not to be identified with Jeremiah's antagonist (xxviii), since the latter was presumably a younger man. Nor are we to identify the Shelemiah here mentioned with the father of Jehucal (3). The charge of desertion was the more plausible that similar desertions seem to have been numerous (xxxviii. 19 : cf. 4, lii. 15); Jeremiah's advice to desert had perhaps already been given to the people (xxi. 9); and he had not concealed his conviction that the city must fall. This conviction was apparently shared by a good number, and there were probably many who strongly objected to the rebellion against Babylon. Those who were more outspoken, if they could not make good their escape, may have been thrust into prison.

14. Jeremiah indignantly denies the charge. On his attitude, and its consistency with the advice given to others to desert, see vol. i, pp. 24, 25.

and brought him to the princes. And the princes were 15
wroth with Jeremiah, and smote him, and put him in
prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe; for they
had made that the prison. When Jeremiah was come 16
into the [a] dungeon house, and into the cells, and Jeremiah
had remained there many days; then Zedekiah the king 17
sent, and fetched him: and the king asked him secretly
in his house, and said, Is there any word from the LORD?
And Jeremiah said, There is. He said also, Thou shalt
be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.
Moreover Jeremiah said unto king Zedekiah, Wherein 18

[a] Or, *house of the pit*

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15. Irijah's arrest of the prophet may have been simply in obedience to his instructions. The decision as to his fate rested with the princes. These princes, it must be remembered, were not those of Jehoiakim's reign, who had been favourable to Jeremiah, since these had for the most part been taken to Babylon, but upstarts who had no experience of government, hot-headed and short-sighted patriots, so inferior in character to their predecessors that Jeremiah contrasted them with the latter as evil figs with good figs. They no doubt disliked him for his pro-Babylonian attitude; but they had been further embittered against him by his unsparing denunciation of the treatment they had accorded to their Hebrew slaves.

the house of Jonathan the scribe. Why this was used is not clear. Perhaps the other prisons were full, and a high official might be specially entrusted with such political prisoners as it was desired to keep under the strictest observation. As we gather from 16, Jeremiah was consigned to an underground dungeon, where he would have died in due course (20), had the princes had their way.

16. When. Read, with the LXX, 'And Jeremiah came,' and place a full stop at the end of the sentence.

cells: or 'vaults.'

many days. When he was removed the siege seems to have been resumed.

17. Zedekiah believed in the real inspiration of Jeremiah, and would have followed his counsel had he dared. But he was in terror of the princes, so he could consult the prophet only in secret (cf. xxxviii. 5, 24–27).

18–20. A simple and dignified remonstrance follows on his unjust

have I sinned against thee, or against thy servants, or against this people, that ye have put me in prison?
19 Where now are your prophets which prophesied unto you, saying, The king of Babylon shall not come against
20 you, nor against this land? And now hear, I pray thee, O my lord the king: let my supplication, I pray thee, [a] be accepted before thee; that thou cause me not to return to the house of Jonathan the scribe, lest I die
21 there. Then Zedekiah the king commanded, and they committed Jeremiah into the court of the guard, and they gave him daily a loaf of bread out of the bakers' street, until all the bread in the city was spent. Thus Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

38 And Shephatiah the son of Mattan, and Gedaliah the

[a] Heb. *fall*.

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imprisonment; then he points the moral of the failure of the false prophets; and finally he proffers his petition that the king will not send him back to the dungeon, where death will be inevitable.

21. Jeremiah was innocent, and the king recognized this, yet he did not venture to set him free. But he so far braved the resentment of the princes as to bring him from the dungeon to the palace and confine him in the court of the guard (see note on xxxii. 2). He also took care for his maintenance, providing him a cake of bread daily. The round cake here indicated was only small, but bread was getting scarcer and scarcer, and it sufficed to keep him alive.

bakers' street. In the East those who practise the same trade or business often live in the same street.

xxxviii. 1-13. Jeremiah is put into a Dungeon by the Princes, but Rescued by Ebed-melech.

Schmidt pronounces this 'manifestly a late legend' (*Enc. Bib.* 2388), but critics generally, including Duhm, treat it as a trustworthy narrative from the pen of Baruch, even if to some extent edited.

xxxviii. 1-6. Four of the princes heard Jeremiah's words to the people, threatening death to those who stayed in the city, but promising life to those who surrendered, and predicting the capture of the city. They asked the king that he might be put to death, since he weakened the hands of the defenders of the city.

son of Pashhur, and Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchiah, heard the words that Jeremiah spake unto all the people, saying, Thus saith the 2
LORD, He that abideth in this city shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: but he that goeth forth to the Chaldeans shall live, and his life shall be unto him for a prey, and he shall live. Thus saith the LORD, 3
This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it. Then the 4
princes said unto the king, Let this man, we pray thee, be

The king replied that he was in their hands, since the king had no power against them. So they put Jeremiah into a dungeon, and his feet sank in the mire.

7–13. Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a palace eunuch, heard of this, and told the king what had been done and that Jeremiah was in danger of speedy death. The king commanded him to get some men to draw him out of the dungeon. So he took rags and let them down to Jeremiah, and he put them under his armholes to cover the ropes. Then they drew him out of the dungeon and he remained in the court of the guard.

xxxviii. 1. Of the first two of the princes nothing further is known, except that Gedaliah, who is of course to be distinguished from the governor (xl, xli), might be the son of the Pashhur who beat Jeremiah and put him in the stocks (xx. 1–3). Jucal is the same as Jehucal of xxxvii. 3, and Pashhur accompanied Zephaniah on the first deputation sent by Zedekiah to the prophet (xxi. 1).

heard . . . people. Although Jeremiah was in confinement, he was not prevented from receiving visitors, as we see from the visit of Hanamel (xxxii); and to these, but especially to the soldiers who were on duty, he would have an opportunity of giving his view of the situation; perhaps more in reply to questions than as a propagandist.

2. This advice is that given also in almost the same words in xxi. 9 (see the note). Some, including even Köberle, hold that at this stage of the conflict Jeremiah would not have given such advice, though earlier he might have done so, and suppose that the passage has been inserted here from xxi. 9.

4. From their point of view, as men responsible for the defence of the city, they were not unjustified in demanding Jeremiah's death, for his unfaltering predictions of utter disaster were calculated to unnerve and discourage the defenders.

put to death; forasmuch as he weakeneth the hands of
the men of war that remain in this city, and the hands of
all the people, in speaking such words unto them: for
this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the
5 hurt. And Zedekiah the king said, Behold, he is in your
hand: for the king is not he that can do any thing
6 against you. Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into
the [a] dungeon of Malchiah [b] the king's son, that was in
the court of the guard: and they let down Jeremiah with
cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but
7 mire: and Jeremiah sank in the mire. Now when Ebed-melech
the Ethiopian, an eunuch, which was in the king's

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[a] Or, *pit* [b] Or, *the son of Hammelech*

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5. Zedekiah apparently yields, but not fully: he leaves the prophet in their hands, but without permission to inflict the death penalty. He may have expected them to confine him again in the house of Jonathan. The LXX reports the king's reply as closing with 'hand;' the rest is a remark of the narrator, 'for the king was not able to do any thing against them.' This is perhaps correct.

6. The princes did not kill Jeremiah outright, perhaps they shrank with superstitious dread from such a deed; but they hit on a plan which they trusted might achieve their purpose as well. In the court of the guard there was a cistern belonging to one of the royal house (see on xxxvi. 26). It was usual for a house to have an underground cistern in which water was stored. In this cistern, as it happened, there was no water, but a deep miry sediment; and the prophet was lowered into this by cords, from which we may be sure no rags protected him, and his feet sank in the mire. It is clear from the sequel that the deed was done in the king's absence from the palace (7) and without his knowledge (9, 10).

7. It is very striking that the only one who intervenes to save Jeremiah from the terrible death the princes designed for him was an Ethiopian eunuch. Some think that the women of the harem, of whom he may have been in charge, had observed the proceeding, and informed Ebed-melech. But it is questionable whether the women's apartments would look on the court of the guard. Whether this was so or not, no sooner did he learn of it than he hastened to tell the king, who was in the gate of Benjamin (see xxxvii. 13), feeling it to be a matter of life and death.

house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon;
the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin; Ebed- 8
melech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to
the king, saying, My lord the king, these men have done 9
evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet,
whom they have cast into the dungeon; and [a] he is like to
die in the place where he is because of the famine: for
there is no more bread in the city. Then the king com- 10

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[a] Heb. *he is dead.*

9. The LXX gives a different text in the former part of the verse: 'Thou hast acted wrongly in what thou hast done to slay this man.' This is accepted by Rothstein (in Kittel), but the Hebrew is much better; Zedekiah had not intended the prophet's death, and his answer to the princes was merely meant as a permission to silence him. It would have been tactless on Ebed-melech's part to accuse the king at a time when he was going to ask for his assistance.

and he is like . . . in the city. This is a very difficult passage. The Hebrew text reads 'and he has died;' it is better to omit a letter and read 'he will die,' than to impose an appropriate sense on the present text; or we might read 'to die' (so apparently LXX, but perhaps translating the present text). The last clause of the verse, if literally taken, gives no suitable meaning. If there was no bread in the city there was no point in the action of the princes, since famine would do their work for them; and for Ebed-melech to rescue him would only have been to doom him to a more lingering death. If there was no more food, he could be supplied with food as little in the court of the guard as in the cistern. But the words are obviously intended to give a reason why he should be rescued at once; so that we must rather interpret them as an exaggerated statement of the actual conditions. The point will then be that bread has become so scarce that in the pit in which he is confined Jeremiah will miss even his scanty ration (xxxvii. 21), which itself barely sufficed to keep body and soul together, and will die of hunger. Possibly the food in the city had been commandeered for distribution, so that the prophet's friends would have had no opportunity of helping him.

in the place where he is: better 'on the spot': cf. 2 Sam. ii. 23, where it is said of Asahel that he 'died on the spot.'

10. thirty men. The Hebrew is irregular and the number too large, even if so many could be spared from the ranks of the sorely thinned defenders (cf. 4, 'the men of war that remain'). We should read 'three men;' these, with Ebed-melech, would be

manded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from
hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the pro-
11 phet out of the dungeon, before he die. So Ebed-melech
took the men with him, and went into the house of the king
under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and
old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the
12 dungeon to Jeremiah. And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian
said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and
rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And
13 Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with the
cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah
remained in the court of the guard.
14 Then Zedekiah the king sent, and took Jeremiah the

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ample for the purpose. The king's language shows that he recognized the urgency of immediate action.

11. Ebed-melech's thoughtfulness to spare the prophet all needless pain is shown in his provision of rags to save him from being cut by the rope, and then by his letting the rags down to him with ropes that he might not have to grope for them in the mire. The rags he procured from a lumber-room under the treasury.

12. The LXX reads simply 'And he said, Put these under the cords, and Jeremiah did so.' Duhm prefers this, thinking that Jeremiah would sit on the rope and not be tormented by being pulled up with the cords under his armholes. But faint with hunger and ill usage, it was much better for him to be drawn up as the Hebrew text describes, than risk a fall from the rope as he was being raised; besides, had he sat on the rope, the provision of rags would have been a cruel refinement of kindness when time was so precious. The delay was worth while to protect the armpits.

13. The princes seem not to have interfered further with the prophet. Probably the end was already very near, and the king granted his petition not to be taken back to the house of Jonathan (26).

xxxviii. 14–28a. JEREMIAH'S FINAL APPEAL TO THE KING TO SURRENDER.

This narrative is taken from Baruch's memoirs, and is unquestionably trustworthy. Its information is too precise to come from any but a first-hand source. Probably the interview took place on the same day on which he was rescued by Ebed-melech. The prophet unto him into the third entry that is in the

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account which the king told him to give must have been plausible, or it would not have satisfied the suspicious princes. Had some delay intervened between the rescue and the interview, the dread that he might be sent back to his former prison would have been less natural; it was, however, the most natural thing in the world to anticipate that the princes, thwarted in their first attempt on Jeremiah, would avail themselves of the king's permission already accorded them (5) to send him back to the house of Jonathan, where he would no longer be able to weaken the defence. The narrative is told without any mention of Jeremiah's petition, so that the inference is suggested that the king simply invented the pretext of the petition in order to conceal the real purpose of the interview. But when we have regard to Baruch's mode of telling his story, this inference is by no means necessary. It is more than probable that Jeremiah would use the opportunity to address the king, as he had done before, on this matter of such personal moment to himself, and that the request was actually granted. Accordingly the prophet probably told no actual lie, but saved the king by concealing part, and the more important part, of the truth.

xxxviii. 14–18. Zedekiah inquired of Jeremiah if he could reveal anything to him, and swore that he would not kill him or surrender him to his foes. Jeremiah then said that, if he would surrender, his life and the city would be spared; if not, it would be burned and he would not escape.

19–23. Zedekiah replied that he feared the Chaldeans would hand him over to the Jewish deserters. Jeremiah replied that they would not do so, and besought him to obey, so it would be well with him. But if he refuse, then the women of the palace shall sing the dirge over him when they are captured. His friends have led him astray, and abandon him now that his feet have sunk in the mire. His wives and children and he himself will be captured, and the city will be burned.

24–28^a. The king enjoined secrecy on the prophet, assuring him that he should not die. He also told him that if the princes asked what he and the king had said, he was to reply that he had petitioned not to be sent back to Jonathan's house, to die there. So when the princes asked him, he replied as the king commanded, and thus the purport of the interview remained unknown. So he stayed in the court of the guard.

xxxviii. 14. the third entry. This was no doubt well known to Baruch, but it is not mentioned elsewhere, nor do we ever read of a first or second entry. Giesebrecht with a slight emend-

house of the LORD: and the king said unto Jeremiah,
15 I will ask thee a thing; hide nothing from me. Then
Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah, If I declare it unto thee,
wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee
16 counsel, thou wilt not hearken unto me. So Zedekiah the
king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, As the LORD
liveth, that made us this soul, I will not put thee to death,
neither will I give thee into the hand of these men
17 that seek thy life. Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah,
Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel:
If thou wilt go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes,
then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned
18 with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house: but if

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ation (*m*^{e}*bō' hashshalīshīm* for *mābō' hashsh*^{e}*līshī*) gets the sense 'the body-guard's entry,' which is accepted by Duhm. P. Haupt, on the other hand, defends the present text; he supposes that the main entrance on the east was the first entrance, that on the north was the second, that on the south was the third, leading from the Temple to the palace. In the absence of definite information decision between these views is impossible. Clearly it was a place convenient for the king to reach without observation, and suitable for a secret meeting. The king was like a patient who begs his doctor to tell him the whole truth, but clings desperately to the hope of favourable news and is unprepared with any courage for the worst.

15. The prophet has rightly gauged the king's character. If the truth he has demanded should prove unwelcome, his personal resentment will be provoked, and he will abandon him to his enemies. So before Jeremiah speaks he expresses his fear to the king.

16. Zedekiah swears by Yahweh the giver of life (an uncommon oath), both to the prophet and himself, that he will not cause Jeremiah's life to be taken: may he lose his own if he is false to his oath!

secretly: is omitted by the LXX, probably correctly; it should have come at an earlier point.

17. Jeremiah gives the king the advice he had given to his subjects. The only hope for himself and the city lies in surrender. He speaks of 'the king of Babylon's princes' because Nebuchadnezzar himself was not in command at Jerusalem. See xxxix. 3, 5.

thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand. And Zedekiah the king 19 said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen away to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me. But Jeremiah said, They 20 shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, in that which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well with thee, and thy soul shall live. But if thou 21

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19. Zedekiah shrinks from surrender, lest the Chaldeans deliver him over to the Jews who had deserted and they mishandle him. It was not an imaginary terror. Party spirit no doubt ran high; those who were opposed to the alliance with Egypt and revolt from Babylon would bitterly resent the ruinous policy for which the king had been responsible, and which its real authors had carried through with such high-handed violence towards its opponents. See note on xxxvii. 13. It was not taunts and insults merely that Zedekiah feared, but physical ill-treatment.

21, 22. If, however, the king refuses to accept these assurances, then this is the scene which Yahweh has shown the prophet. He has seen the palace women led out to the princes of Nebuchadnezzar, and singing a lamentation as they went. The dirge is in Qina rhythm, as Budde points out, and Jeremiah probably pronounced it so as to bring out its real character. But it is questionable if Budde is right in supposing that the lines are a well-known dirge, in use among the wailing women. The parallel in Obad. 7 does not prove this, for that passage is later and probably depends on ours. As we read 22 we cannot help being struck with the fact that the metaphor answers to the experience through which the prophet had passed. True, the figure is drawn rather from the fate of a traveller, who against his better judgement has taken a path which has led him into a swamp. But the words 'thy feet are sunk in the mire' recall so vividly the statement in 6, that they were probably suggested by the experience itself. And, if so, the vision seems to have flashed on the prophet even as he was speaking, and the verses to have been improvised. With his clairvoyant faculty he sees the sorrowful procession, the burden of their song he hears as a clairaudient, but only its general tenor; the form in which he reproduces it is moulded by his own experience. He had been cast by his enemies into the cistern, and his feet had sunk in the mire; Zedekiah had been mis-

refuse to go forth, this is the word that the LORD hath
22 shewed me: Behold, all the women that are left in the
king of Judah's house shall be brought forth to the king
of Babylon's princes, and those women shall say, [a] Thy
familiar friends have [b] set thee on, and have prevailed
over thee: *now that* thy feet are sunk in the mire, they
23 are turned away back. And they shall bring out all thy
wives and thy children to the Chaldeans: and thou shalt
not escape out of their hand, but shalt be taken by the
hand of the king of Babylon: and [c] thou shalt cause this
24 city to be burned with fire. Then said Zedekiah unto
Jeremiah, Let no man know of these words, and thou
25 shalt not die. But if the princes hear that I have talked

[a] Heb. *The men of thy peace.* [b] Or, *deceived thee*
[c] Heb. *thou shalt burn &c.*

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led by his friends, but when his feet sank in the mire, no one drew him out. It may be added that Duhm, while recognizing the authenticity of the saying, thinks that it may have been spoken with reference to Judah, betrayed by her allies, especially Egypt. But while it would suit this admirably, there is no reason to question the representation in the text.

the women that are left: that is, from the previous capture of the city in 597 B.C. and the troubles of the present siege.

now that . . . **they . . . back.** Probably we should point differently and render, with the LXX, 'they have made thy feet to sink . . . back.' His friends have led him into trouble, and now leave him to his fate.

23. This verse is obviously no part of the vision, it adds very little to what has been already said, and the impression of the preceding verses is weakened by it. Duhm may be right in regarding it as an insertion. At the close we should read 'and this city shall be burned with fire,' with LXX and other Versions and a few Hebrew MSS.

24. Zedekiah commands secrecy , if this is observed he will not die. He seems to mean that if the prophet betrays what has passed the princes will kill him, since the king is powerless to protect him.

25. In spite of his precautions he fears that his interview with the prophet will not have gone unobserved, and instructs him how he is to answer the inevitable question of the princes.

with thee, and they come unto thee, and say unto thee, Declare unto us now what thou hast said unto the king; hide it not from us, and we will not put thee to death: also what the king said unto thee: then thou shalt say 26
unto them, I [a] presented my supplication before the king, that he would not cause me to return to Jonathan's house, to die there. Then came all the princes unto Jeremiah, 27
and asked him: and he told them according to all these words that the king had commanded. So they left off speaking with him; for the matter was not [b] perceived. So Jeremiah abode in the court of the guard until the 28
day that Jerusalem was taken.

And it came to pass when Jerusalem was taken, [S] [c] (in 39

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[a] Heb. *caused to fall.* [b] Or, *reported*

[c] See ch. lii. 4, &c., 2 Kings xxv. 1-12.

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hide it . . . death: a veiled threat; if you refuse to disclose it we shall kill you.

26. On this see the Introduction to this section (p. 171), where it is pointed out that Jeremiah probably had made this request to the king during the interview.

27. It fell out as the king had anticipated, and Jeremiah answered as he had been bidden. He probably told the truth, but not the whole truth, and he made a false impression on the princes. Even to-day exponents of ethics dispute how far such conduct is legitimate. At that time moral standards were very different from our own. And the consequences of a disclosure would have been serious, not for the prophet alone but for the king, who would have felt that his confidences had been betrayed. Duhm has a penetrating discussion of the question.

xxxviii. 28^b—xxxix. 14. THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM AND JEREMIAH'S FORTUNES.

This section presents some perplexing phenomena. We have a narrative of the destruction of Jerusalem which goes over a good deal of the ground covered by lii. In this the main subject is the fate of Zedekiah and the people rather than of Jeremiah. Further 4-13 is omitted in the LXX. Chap. xxxix. 1, 2 is inserted in the middle of a sentence between xxxviii. 28^b and xxxix. 3. These two verses are probably an insertion. They take us back in 1 to a point in the history which we have left far behind, and they are the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth

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an abridgement of lii. 4–7. When they are removed xxxviii. 28^{b} and xxxix. 3 form a single well-connected sentence. The question as to 4–13 is more difficult. This falls into two main divisions, 4–10 and 11–13, the latter of which is concerned with the lot of Jeremiah. The former is very generally regarded as an interpolation on the following grounds. It is absent in the LXX, and is an abridgement of lii. 7–16. It does not connect well with 3, for obviously Zedekiah did not wait till he saw that the Babylonian princes had taken their seat (4), but took to flight as soon as he knew that a breach had been made in the walls (lii. 7). Nor can one explain why the princes mentioned in 3 are left out of account in what follows. 11–13 is more relevant to the author's purpose, since it is concerned with Jeremiah, and some who regard 4–10 as an interpolation take another view of 11–13. Still there are grave reasons against accepting its authenticity. It is possible that Nebuchadnezzar had personally interested himself in the prophet, but it is hardly likely. Verse 11 does not connect well with 3, since Nebuzaradan is not enumerated among the princes in 3, and according to lii. 12 did not reach Jerusalem till a month later. It is also absent in the LXX. When 1, 2, 4–13 have been eliminated, we have a narrative to which no serious objection can be taken in xxxviii. 21^{b}, xxxix. 3, 14, which relates what the reader of the memoir would be anxious to learn, how Jeremiah fared after the capture of the city. Schmidt, it is true, strikes out the whole as 'manifestly unhistorical' (*Enc. Bib.* 2388). A clever attempt to secure more of 4–13 for the memoirs may be seen in Rothstein's introduction to the section in Kautzsch.

xxxviii. 28^{b}–xxxix. 3. When Jerusalem was captured (Nebuchadnezzar came against it in the tenth month of Zedekiah's ninth year, and a breach was made in the walls in the fourth month of his eleventh year), the princes of Nebuchadnezzar sat in the middle gate.

4–10. When Zedekiah and his warriors saw them, they fled by night by way of the Arabah, but he was overtaken by the Chaldeans in the plains of Jericho and taken to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, who slew his sons and all the nobles of Judah, blinded Zedekiah and bound him in fetters. The Chaldeans burned the palace and the city, and broke down the walls. Then Nebuzaradan carried the rest of the people, including the deserters, to Babylon, but left the poor who had nothing and gave them lands.

11–14. Nebuchadnezzar had charged Nebuzaradan to take care of Jeremiah, so he and the princes sent and fetched him from the court of the guard, and entrusted him to Gedaliah, who set him at liberty.

month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his
army against Jerusalem, and besieged it; in the eleventh 2
year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of
the month, a breach was made in the city:) [B] that all 3
the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the
middle gate, even Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, [a] Rab-saris, Nergal-sharezer, [a] Rab-mag, with all the
rest of the princes of the king of Babylon. [S] And it 4
came to pass that when Zedekiah the king of Judah and
all the men of war saw them, then they fled, and went
forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's
garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went
out the way of the Arabah. But the army of the Chal- 5
deans pursued after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the
plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they
brought him up to Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon to

[a] Titles of officers.

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xxxix. 1, 2: taken from lii. 4–7.

3. When the city was captured, the Babylonian princes sat in the middle gate, the situation of which is unknown, to administer affairs, and then sent to release Jeremiah (14). The names create difficulties. There are four names, the third and fourth of which have official designations appended. Of these four names the first and fourth are identical and probably duplicates. In 13 only two princes (apart from Nebuzaradan) are mentioned, and Nebushazban is there said to be the Rab-saris, the name given to the holder of the office in 3. Sarsechim is inexplicable. Samgar is perhaps, as Giesebrecht suggests, a corruption for Sar-mag = Rab-mag, and is to be omitted as a doublet, while -nebo Sarsechim is probably a corrupt form of Nebushazban (13). Accordingly two princes are mentioned whose names and titles are correctly given in 13. Rab-saris may mean 'chief of the eunuchs,' but more probably 'chief of the heads' (*rabû-să-rêši*), i. e. 'chief of the principal men;' Rab-mag is commonly explained to mean 'chief of the soothsayers,' but may mean 'chief of princes.'

4. The extract from lii. 4–16 begins here and continues to 10. See Introduction to this section. For the exegesis see Dr. Skinner's Commentary on Kings; as explained in the Introduction to the notes on Jer. lii.

Riblah in the land of Hamath, and he [a] gave judgement
6 upon him. Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of
Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of
7 Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put
out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him in fetters, to carry
8 him to Babylon. And the Chaldeans burned the king's
house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake
9 down the walls of Jerusalem. Then Nebuzaradan the
[b] captain of the guard carried away captive into Babylon
the residue of the people that remained in the city, the
deserters also, that fell away to him, and the residue of the
10 people that remained. But Nebuzaradan the captain of
the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing,
in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields
11 at the same time. Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon
gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the
12 captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to
him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he
13 shall say unto thee. So Nebuzaradan the captain of the
guard sent, and Nebushazban, Rab-saris, and Nergal-sharezer,
Rab-mag, and all the chief officers of the king of
14 Babylon; [B] they sent, and took Jeremiah out of the

[a] Heb. *spake judgements with him.* See ch. xii. 1.

[b] See Gen. xxxvii. 36.

11, 12. If the account here is historical, we must suppose that Nebuchadnezzar had learned of Jeremiah's efforts to maintain peace, his advice to the Jews to surrender, and his unshaken confidence in the victory of Babylon. This is by no means impossible, but its probability is dubious.

13. See on 3; we have seen that this verse gives a more correct account of the officials and their titles.

14. This verse connects directly with 3. The two princes there mentioned, in the corrected text, had Jeremiah brought from the court of the guard and handed him over to Gedaliah, whose father Ahikam had early in Jehoiakim's reign protected the prophet (xxvi. 24). Presumably he had taken Jeremiah's advice and sur-court of the guard, and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, that he should carry him home: so he dwelt among the people.

Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, 15
while he was shut up in the court of the guard, saying,
Go, and speak to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, saying, 16
Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel:
Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil,

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rendered to the Chaldeans, and from him they had probably learnt about the prophet's attitude.

carry him home: i.e. probably to his own home, but the Hebrew is unusual and ambiguous. The last clause seems to mean that he could move freely among the people, he was a prisoner no longer.

xxxix. 15–18. A PROMISE OF SAFETY TO EBED-MELECH.

The authenticity of this section is denied not only by Schmidt, who regards the story of the rescue itself as unhistorical, but also by Duhm, who is followed by Erbt and Cornill. Duhm's judgement is influenced to some extent by his view that the women of the harem had imagined that the princes were getting rid of Jeremiah so as to have one less mouth to feed, and that Ebed-melech had shared this naïve opinion, so had saved him from pity, rather than as a pious person who had trusted in God (18). This ingenious romance rests on no solid foundation, and Cornill relies simply on its inappropriate position in the book, and its insignificant content. It is of course, as Giesebrecht says, impossible to prove the authenticity, but there is no adequate reason for denying it. Opposite inferences might be drawn from the parallelism with the address to Baruch (xlv). We should, it is true,have expected it to follow xxxviii. 13 or xxxviii. 28^{a}. But the editor is responsible for the arrangement, and he may have wished to carry the story on without interruption to the deliverance of Jeremiah after the siege. Probably it is chronologically later than xxxviii. 27.

xxxix. 15–18. While he was in the court of the guard, Yahweh bade Jeremiah tell Ebed-melech that He was bringing evil upon the city, but would deliver him, and he should not be delivered into the power of those whom he feared. His life should be spared, because he trusted in God.

xxxix. 16. and they . . . day. The LXX omits the words, which have probably arisen through dittography of the opening words of 17.

and not for good; and they [a] shall be accomplished
17 before thee in that day. But I will deliver thee in that
day, saith the LORD: and thou shalt not be given into
18 the hand of the men of whom thou art afraid. For
I will surely save thee, and thou shalt not fall by the
sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because
thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.

40 [R] The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, after that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let

[a] Or, *shall be before thee*

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17. the men . . . afraid: perhaps the Babylonians (as 18 suggests), but the phrase itself suits better the princes, whose vengeance for his interference he might well dread.

18. thy life . . . prey: see note on xxi. 9, and cf. the promise to Baruch (xlv. 5).

xl. 1-6. JEREMIAH, AFTER HIS RELEASE BY NEBUZARADAN, PREFERS TO REMAIN IN PALESTINE.

This passage, apart from 6, is regarded by Duhm, Erbt, and Cornill as a legend, connected with xxxiv. 11, 12. But it was by no means impossible for the situation described to arise. When Nebuzaradan, a month after the capture of the city, arrived at Jerusalem, Gedaliah seems to have gone to Mizpah. Jeremiah remained in the city, and was put in fetters with the other citizens. By the time the prisoners reached Ramah, Gedaliah would have heard of Jeremiah's case and intervened. The Babylonian officer may have been quite ignorant about Jeremiah; or he may have known of him either directly from Nebuchadnezzar, as we are told in xxxix. 11-13, or from the deserters. In any case it needed but an explanation to secure his liberty. It is difficult, however, to think that the address of Nebuzaradan to Jeremiah is an authentic report so far as 2^b, 3 with their familiar phraseology are concerned.

xl. 1-6. At Ramah Nebuzaradan took Jeremiah, who was in chains with the prisoners, and said that Yahweh had punished the people for their sins. He would release him and permit him his choice to go to Babylon or to remain with Gedaliah. So Jeremiah went to Gedaliah at Mizpah.

xl. 1. The opening words are due to the editor and are entirely inappropriate, since no oracle follows (see note on xxxi. 15-22).

him go from Ramah, [B] when he had taken him being bound in chains among all the captives of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon.
And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said 2
unto him, [S] The LORD thy God pronounced this evil
upon this place: and the LORD hath brought it, and 3
done according as he spake; because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. [B] And now, behold, 4
I loose thee this day from the chains which are upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come, and I will look well unto thee; but if it seem ill unto thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land is before thee; whither it seemeth good and [a] convenient unto thee to go, thither
go. Now while he was not yet gone back, Go back then, 5

[a] Or, *right*

Ramah: see note on xxxi. 15. The captives probably halted here for the final arrangements to be made for their journey to Babylon.

2, 3. Here the heathen governor instructs Jeremiah in the latter's own theology.

4. Nebuzaradan sets him free from the manacles which fettered his hands, and gives him his choice of accompanying him to Babylon, where he will be treated with honour, or remaining in his own country.

5. Now while he was not yet gone back. The Hebrew is strange, and many attempts to explain it have been offered. The words are absent in the LXX; they seem to be a gloss, which is itself corrupt. The following words then connect with 4 and develop the second alternative offered to the prophet. If he decides to remain in Palestine, then let him go to Gedaliah and share in the task of building up the community under the new conditions. But that the prophet may feel that he has unrestricted liberty of action, the captain adds that if neither of the suggestions is to his mind, let him go wherever he wishes. We are not told what Jeremiah said in reply, but no doubt he signified his intention to remain. So the captain gave him 'victuals,' i.e., as the word means, food for his journey, and a present, i.e. to show him

said he, to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth [a] convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him
6 [b] victuals and a present, and let him go. Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah, and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

7 [c] Now when all the captains of the forces which were

[a] Or, *right* [b] Or, *an allowance* [c] See 2 Kings xxv. 23, 24.

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honour and provide for his necessities in the near future. Perhaps 'victuals and' should be omitted, as by LXX: the journey was short.

6. The choice of Jeremiah was probably determined by the thought that his place was rather with Gedaliah and the remnant than with the exiles. He looked forward to a complete restoration of the nation; and since its future home was to be in Palestine, he felt that Providence called him to remain in the land where he had so long laboured and build up the nucleus of the new Israel, and not at his age to begin a new life in Babylon. A sense of personal loyalty to Gedaliah, whom he might guide in his task, may also have moved him.

Mizpah: a city of Benjamin, lying from four to five miles north-west of Jerusalem, on the hill now called Neby Samwil.

xl. 7—xli. 3. GEDALIAH IS MURDERED BY ISHMAEL.

Schmidt says 'xl. 7—xli. 18 must have been taken from another source than the biography. The lifelikeness of the story is much praised, and it is generally used as an authentic account by modern historians. Literary critics are still apt to be deceived by vividness of description, local colour, names and dates, and charmed into forgetfulness of the most glaring inconsistencies and historical impossibilities. Such inconsistencies and impossibilities are not wanting in this story. A confused memory of the first Chaldean governor and of an abortive attempt by a side branch of the Davidic family to overthrow the new government, and local legends clustering about the cistern of Asa and the pool of Gibeon. may lie at its foundation; but in its present form it cannot well be earlier than the second century' (*Enc. Bib.* 2386). This drastic judgement is not shared by others, but while attributing the narrative to Baruch all are agreed that it presents very diffiin the fields, even they and their men, heard that the

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cult problems. A plausible explanation can be offered for Ishmael's murder of Gedaliah. It is questionable whether Baalis instigated him, in spite of Johanan's statement to that effect. Ishmael belonged to the house of David, and may have resented the appointment of Gedaliah, who did not belong to the royal house. But he seems to have been a strong adherent of the anti-Babylonian party, and would thus be politically opposed to Gedaliah and to the settlement of the country under Chaldean rule. It is true that his action was not only inexcusable but irrational. He could not hope to help his people's cause by a deed which was likely to exasperate the Babylonians. But it is not without other examples that a defeated party should express its patriotism by blind violence reacting most injuriously on its own cause. Much more inexplicable is the career of violence on which he entered after he had murdered Gedaliah. The sorrow of the pilgrims over the downfall of Jerusalem should have appealed to his sympathies, unless it seemed a reflection on the policy of the war-party which had involved such ruin. The sparing of the ten men who offered to disclose the stores they had hidden, might be due to desire for plunder, or to the anticipation that if he could initiate a guerilla warfare against the Chaldeans, such stores would be useful. The killing of the other seventy admits of no rational explanation ; one is almost tempted to think that there was an abnormal strain in Ishmael's personality. That eighty men, though unarmed, should tamely let themselves be overpowered by eleven men, and that seventy should be butchered, apparently without resistance, is also remarkable. And similarly right through the history this small company of bandits has it all its own way till Johanan's rescue-party forces it to escape into Ammon. We are not justified on account of these difficulties in denying the historicity of the narrative, but we must renounce the attempt at any rational explanation of it.

xl. 7–12. When the captains heard that Gedaliah had been made governor, and that the Jews who were left in Judah were committed to his care, they came to him at Mizpah. He exhorted them to be loyal to the Chaldeans, to gather fruits and dwell in their cities. And the Jews who had taken refuge in the surrounding countries came to Gedaliah and gathered much fruit.

13–16. Johanan and the captains warn Gedaliah that Baalis the king of Ammon has sent Ishmael to kill him, but Gedaliah refuses to believe it. Then Johanan offers to kill Ishmael, to avoid the ruin that would follow on Gedaliah's murder. But Gedaliah forbids him, treating his accusation as a slander on Ishmael.

king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, [a] and of the poorest of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to
8 Babylon; then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah
9 the son of the Maacathite, they and their men. And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king
10 of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to stand before the

[a] Or, *even*

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xli. 1–3. In the seventh month Ishmael, accompanied by ten men, after being entertained by Gedaliah, murders him and all the Jews and Chaldeans that were with him.

xl. 7–9 are repeated in an abbreviated form in 2 Kings xxv. 23, 24. The Babylonians had not thought it worth while to scour the country and collect all the scattered bands of Jews that had been in arms against them. These now made their submission to Gedaliah. Jonathan is omitted in Kings, but whether rightly is uncertain. Netophah seems to have been a village on the east of Bethlehem, now Beit Nettif (Neh. vii. 26, xii. 28, 1 Chron. ii. 54). Maacah lay to the south-east of Hermon.

9. The LXX and 2 Kings xxv. 24 give a better text, 'Fear not because of the servants of the Chaldeans,' i. e. such Babylonian officials as were left on duty in various parts of the land.

10. to stand before. In xv. 19, xxxv. 19 the phrase means 'to be engaged in the service of.' If that is the meaning here, the point is that Gedaliah has his residence at Mizpah, that he may serve the interests of such Chaldeans as may come to him. The sense required is, however, that he should serve the interests of the Jews entrusted to his care. He would, it is true, have an opportunity of doing this as servant of the Chaldeans, but the main point would thus be implied rather than expressed. We should accordingly interpret as in xv. 1, where it means 'to intercede.'

Chaldeans, which shall come unto us: but ye, gather ye wine and summer fruits and oil, and put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken.
Likewise when all the Jews that were in Moab, and 11
among the children of Ammon, and in Edom, and that were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan;
then all the Jews returned out of all places whither they 12
were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much.

Moreover Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the 13
captains of the forces that were in the fields, came to
Gedaliah to Mizpah, and said unto him, Dost thou know 14
that Baalis the king of the children of Ammon hath sent

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gather ye wine . . . oil. The city had been captured in the fourth month; a month later Nebuzaradan had come to wind up the affairs of the conquered kingdom. Gedaliah was killed in the seventh month, according to Jewish tradition on the third of the month. That in so short a time it should have been possible to gather such quantities of grapes, olives, and summer fruits as they appear from 12 to have done, is a remarkable testimony to the extent to which the Babylonians had risen above the methods of barbarism which characterized ancient and have characterized so much modern warfare. The fruit trees had been spared, and the fruit would be just ripe.

ye have taken: better 'ye will take;' up to the present they had been 'in the fields' (7).

13. that were in the fields: probably a scribe's addition from 7; matters had since altered.

14. Baalis may have been king of Ammon when the five kings sent ambassadors to Zedekiah to negotiate an alliance against Babylon (xxvii. 3). If so, he would have a grudge against those who had thwarted the project. But this would hardly account for his instigation of the assassination, and it is not easy to see what advantage he hoped to reap from it. Johanan may have been mistaken. Gedaliah's refusal to believe the charge confirms the impression of his noble character which we should otherwise derive from the narrative.

Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to take thy life? But
15 Gedaliah the son of Ahikam believed them not. Then
Johanan the son of Kareah spake to Gedaliah in Mizpah
secretly, saying, Let me go, I pray thee, and I will slay
Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and no man shall know
it: wherefore should he take thy life, that all the Jews
which are gathered unto thee should be scattered, and
16 the remnant of Judah perish? But Gedaliah the son of
Ahikam said unto Johanan the son of Kareah, Thou
shalt not do this thing: for thou speakest falsely of
Ishmael.

41 [a] Now it came to pass in the seventh month, that
Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama,
of the seed royal, and *one of* the chief officers of the
king, and ten men with him, came unto Gedaliah the
son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and there they did eat bread
2 together in Mizpah. Then arose Ishmael the son of
Nethaniah, and the ten men that were with him, and
smote Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan
with the sword, and slew him, whom the king of Babylon

[a] See 2 Kings xxv. 25.

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15. Johanan saw clearly the chaos that would result from the murder of Gedaliah, on whom the future of the little community depended, and felt himself justified in offering to remove him secretly. To this Gedaliah could not assent, for he would not believe evil of Ishmael; and even had he shared Johanan's opinion, he would hardly have protected himself by secret murder. Probably he would have taken effective precautions.

xli. 1. Cf. 2 Kings xxv. 25.

in the seventh month. The Jews kept the fast for Gedaliah on the third of this month, and this probably preserves a correct tradition of the date of the murder.

and one . . . king. If the words are authentic the R.V. is probably correct in inserting '*one of*,' since Ishmael was accompanied only by ten men (2), and chief officers of the king in addition were certainly not with him. But the words are omitted

had made governor over the land. Ishmael also slew 3
all the Jews that were with him, even with Gedaliah, at
Mizpah, and the Chaldeans that were found there, even
the men of war. And it came to pass the second day 4
after he had slain Gedaliah, and no man knew it, that 5

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in LXX and 2 Kings xxv. 25 (which, however, abbreviates), and should probably be omitted.

3. even the men of war. The LXX omits these words, probably rightly; had Babylonian soldiers been there, the massacre would hardly have been accomplished so easily.

xli. 4–18. ISHMAEL, AFTER FURTHER ATROCITIES, FORCED TO RETREAT TO AMMON.

Nothing need be added to what has been said in the Introduction to the previous section.

xli. 4–10. The following day Ishmael met eighty pilgrims, and invited them to come to Gedaliah. When they came into the city he slew them and cast them into the pit, with the exception of ten men who offered to show him hidden stores of food. The pit which he filled with dead bodies was that made by Asa. Then he carried off all the rest of the people who were left in Mizpah, to go to the land of Ammon.

11–18. When Johanan and the captains heard of Ishmael's doings they pursued him and came up with him at Gibeon. The captives joined Johanan, but Ishmael escaped with eight men to the Ammonites. Then Johanan and the captains took those whom they had rescued near to Bethlehem, purposing for fear of the Chaldeans to go to Egypt.

xli. 4. the second day: i.e. probably what we should call the next day. Ishmael took precautions that no one outside of Mizpah should learn of the massacre.

5. It is remarkable that these pilgrims came from what was formerly the Northern Kingdom, where no doubt many Israelites remained, but blended with foreign settlers. The sanctuary to which they were coming was not, as some suppose, at Mizpah, for 'the house of the LORD' must refer to Jerusalem. Any purpose they meant to serve at Mizpah could have equally well been accomplished at home, and the narrative suggests that they would not have entered Mizpah at all but for Ishmael's invitation. We are not to press the phrase 'the house of the LORD' to mean that these pilgrims had not even heard that the Temple was destroyed; their whole attitude of mourning is eloquent as to their knowledge of this. When the structure was destroyed the site still re-

there came certain from Shechem, from Shiloh, and
from Samaria, even fourscore men, having their beards
shaven and their clothes rent, and having cut themselves,
with [a] oblations and frankincense in their hand, to bring
6 them to the house of the LORD. And Ishmael the son
of Nethaniah went forth from Mizpah to meet them,
weeping all along as he went: and it came to pass, as
he met them, he said unto them, Come to Gedaliah the
7 son of Ahikam. And it was so, when they came into
the midst of the city, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah
slew them, *and cast them* into the midst of the pit, he,
8 and the men that were with him. But ten men were

[a] Or, *meal offerings*

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mained sacred, and it is possible that some sort of cultus may have been carried on there during the exile. The pilgrims were going to offer not an animal but a vegetable offering together with frankincense. For Shiloh the LXX reads Salem, but though accepted by several who compare Gen. xxxiii. 18, the Hebrew is probably to be preferred. In token of deep mourning for the fate of Jerusalem they had shaved the beard, rent their clothes, and gashed themselves (cf. xvi. 6).

6. weeping all along as he went. If the text is correct Ishmael weeps in pretended sympathy. But this theatrical exhibition might well have struck the pilgrims as protesting too much. The LXX, 'as they were going along and weeping,' is much better. Giesebrecht's objection that this should have been mentioned in 5 is plausible, but incorrect. For the description in 5 refers to the dress they wore and the signs of mourning they displayed throughout their journey; the weeping is not a continuous action, but a short though passionate outburst. And when we consider the circumstances this clause adds a most effective touch to the picture. For from Mizpah they catch sight of the ruined city, their first sight of its desolation, and burst into unrestrained wailing. We are naturally reminded of Luke xix. 41.

7. Having thus enticed them into the midst of the city, and probably into a situation where they were in a trap, Ishmael and his companions slew them. The reason for this atrocity cannot be conjectured with any confidence. (See the Introduction to the previous section, p. 183.)

8. His reason for sparing the ten men is uncertain: see the found among them that said unto Ishmael, Slay us not: for we have stores hidden in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey. So he forbare, and slew them not among their brethren. Now the pit 9 wherein Ishmael cast all the dead bodies of the men whom he had slain, by the side of Gedaliah, (the same was that which Asa the king had made for fear of Baasha king of Israel,) Ishmael the son of Nethaniah filled it with them that were slain. Then Ishmael carried away 10 captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the children of Ammon.

But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the 11 captains of the forces that were with him, heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done, then they took all the men, and went to fight with 12

Introduction. It is still quite common for farmers in Palestine to store grain and other produce in pits, and it is to such stores that allusion is here made. (See Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, pp. 509, 510.)

9. The appropriate climax was reached with the throwing of the dead bodies of his victims into the great cistern with which Asa had furnished Mizpah when he built it as a fortress against Baasha (1 Kings xv. 22). A cistern of this kind was necessary if a stronghold situated at the height of Mizpah was not to be forced by thirst to surrender. The cistern was ceremonially defiled and rendered useless by Ishmael's act.

by the side of Gedaliah. The Hebrew is unintelligible. The LXX reads 'was a great pit;' the difference in the Hebrew is slight, and the LXX obviously gives the true text.

10. the king's daughters: not necessarily the daughters of Zedekiah, but the princesses of the royal house. They were related to Ishmael; the others he would take as hostages or perhaps to sell into slavery. It is noteworthy that the Chaldeans had left princesses of the blood in Palestine.

12. Gibeon: i. e. el-Jib, about a mile to the north of Mizpah: see

Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the
13 great waters that are in Gibeon. Now it came to pass
that when all the people which were with Ishmael saw
Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the
14 forces that were with him, then they were glad. So all
the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from
Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan
15 the son of Kareah. But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah
escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the
16 children of Ammon. Then took Johanan the son of
Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that were with
him, all the remnant of the people whom he had recovered
from Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, from Mizpah, after
that he had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, even the
men of war, and the women, and the children, and the
17 eunuchs, whom he had brought again from Gibeon: and

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xxviii. 1. The 'waters' are apparently to be identified with the pool mentioned in 2 Sam. ii. 13, the scene of the ghastly contest between twelve soldiers of Joab's army and twelve of Abner's.

14. Apparently the slender force of Ishmael could exercise no adequate control over such a train of captives, and would be sufficiently concerned on its own account to escape the vengeance of Johanan. As it was, not only did the captives escape, but Ishmael lost two of his men.

cast about: an archaism meaning 'turned about,' 'turned round.'

16. The text must be corrupt, since 'from Mizpah' is unsuitable. Hitzig has restored the true text by a slight change, 'all the remnant of the people whom Ishmael . . . . had carried away captive from Mizpah.' Probably we should strike out 'even the men of war' as an incorrect gloss on the preceding word. There would hardly be soldiers in the company of captives. Ebed-melech may have been one of the eunuchs; they would be in charge of the princesses.

17. Geruth Chimham is not mentioned elsewhere. Chimham is probably to be identified with the son of Barzillai who befriended David on his flight from Absalom (2 Sam. xix. 37-40). Geruth is a word which occurs here only; it is explained to mean 'khan' or 'lodging place' (so margin), but this is very dubious, and we they departed, and dwelt in [a]Geruth Chimham, which is by Beth-lehem, to go to enter into Egypt, because of the 18 Chaldeans: for they were afraid of them, because Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had slain Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon made governor over the land.

Then all the captains of the forces, and Johanan the **42**

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[a] Or, *the lodging place of Chimham*

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should probably read, with Aquila and Josephus and most recent scholars, Gidroth, i. e. 'sheep-folds.'

xlii. 1—xliii. 7. AGAINST GOD'S WILL AS DECLARED BY JEREMIAH, THE PEOPLE MIGRATE TO EGYPT.

Schmidt naturally regards this section, and the whole story of the migration to Egypt and the incidents said to have happened there, as historically very dubious. Generally it is assigned to Baruch, though Duhm and others suppose that the supplementer has been at work in Jeremiah's reply. In any case the narrative itself is thoroughly trustworthy.

xlii. 1-6. The captains and people ask Jeremiah to pray for direction, and he promises to do so and declare faithfully Yahweh's answer. They promise that they will obey, whatever the answer may be.

7-22. After ten days the word of Yahweh came to the prophet, and he announced it to the people. If they will abide in the land Yahweh will build them up, and the king of Babylon will not molest them. But if they determine to go into Egypt, instead of the peace and plenty they thus hope to secure, sword and famine shall overtake them, and they shall die there. As Yahweh's anger has been poured on the Jews in Jerusalem, so it will be on the Jews in Egypt. They had dealt deceitfully in asking for Yahweh's direction and promising to fulfil it, and then disobeying.

xliii. 1-7. The captains and proud men replied to Jeremiah that he lied in claiming to speak in Yahweh's name; it was at the instigation of Baruch, and death and captivity at the hands of the Babylonians would be the result. So they took all the people, including Jeremiah and Baruch, to Tahpanhes in Egypt.

xlii. 1. It is remarkable that in the story of Ishmael's atrocities no reference is made to Jeremiah or Baruch. It is, however, probable that they were under Gedaliah's protection, and carried

son of Kareah, and [a] Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least even unto the greatest, came
2 near, and said unto Jeremiah the prophet, Let, we pray thee, our supplication [b] be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the LORD thy God, even for all this remnant; for we are left but a few of many, as thine
3 eyes do behold us: that the LORD thy God may shew us the way wherein we should walk, and the thing that we
4 should do. Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard you; behold, I will pray unto the LORD your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass that whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare it unto you; I will keep nothing back
5 from you. Then they said to Jeremiah, The LORD be a true and faithful witness [c] amongst us, if we do not even according to all the word wherewith the LORD thy
6 God shall send thee to us. Whether it be good, or

[a] In ch. xliii. 2, *Azariah.* [b] Heb. *fall.* [c] Or, *against*

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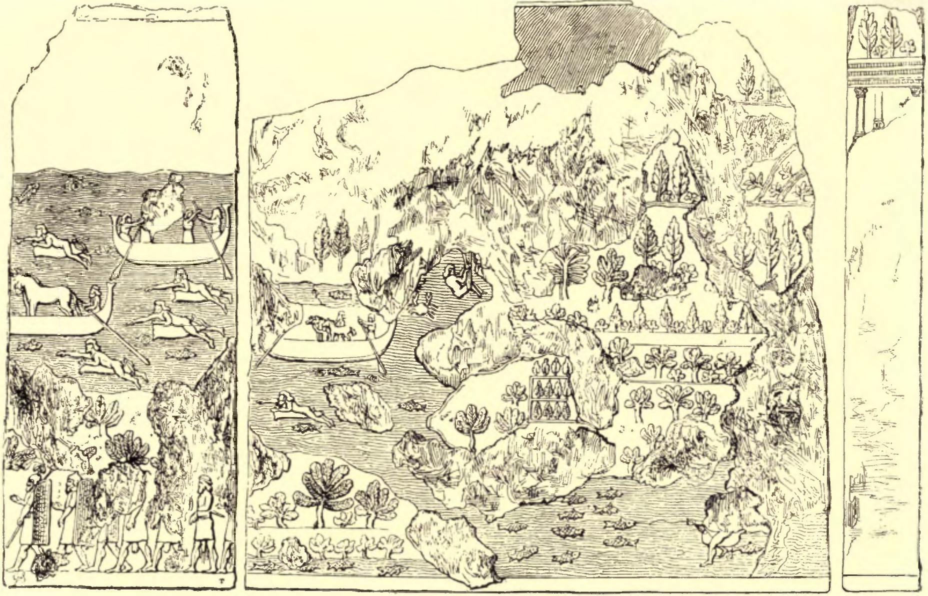
away after his murder and then rescued. We may infer this with some confidence from the mode of reference here.

Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah. We should probably read, with the LXX, 'Azariah the son of Maaseiah:' cf. xliii. 2 and xl. 8.

2, 3. The Jews were quite sincere in their desire to learn what direction Yahweh had for them, and they did not doubt that Jeremiah really stood in the council of God. But they probably did not anticipate that the response would be what it was. Escape from territory under Chaldean government would have seemed to them so obvious a necessity that they would not look for more than instructions how this was to be secured. Notice 'Yahweh thy God' answered in 4 by 'Yahweh your God.' In 5, 6 we have first 'Yahweh thy God,' then 'Yahweh our God.'

4. Jeremiah hints in his reply that the answer may be unwelcome. His own judgement of the situation was no doubt what he subsequently learned the Divine will to be; and he knew that his petitioners had made up their minds in the contrary direction. Still they protest that whatever be the response, evil no less than good, they will obey it (5, 6).



A WATERED GARDEN

whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the LORD our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the LORD our God.

And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of 7
the LORD came unto Jeremiah. Then called he Johanan 8
the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which were with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest, and said unto them, Thus saith the 9
LORD, the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to [a] present your supplication before him: If ye will still abide 10
in this land, then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you. Be not afraid 11

[a] Or, *lay*

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7. This verse is very important for the insight it gives us into the nature of prophecy. Jeremiah does not confuse the Divine revelation with the desires of his heart or the conclusions of his judgement. Otherwise he would not have needed to wait for ten days. His waiting was not that his own mind might be made up, or to still the excitement among the people; for to prolong the suspense, especially when every hour seemed precious, would have been fatal to such an endeavour; nor yet in the hope that new circumstances might guide his decision. It was quite literally because he would not announce as a Divine revelation an answer which he did not definitely know to be such. It was an element in his prophetic gift that he could clearly and sharply distinguish between objective and subjective, between the word of God and the thought of his own heart.

9–22. In this answer Duhm, followed by Erbt, Cornill, and Rothstein, strikes out 15–18 as due to a supplementer. The kernel of the oracle he finds in 19–21; what belongs to it in 9–14 he regards as much worked over.

10. I repent me. To the modern reader this suggests that Yahweh regrets what He has done, and if He were again placed in the same situation would act differently. This, however, is not the meaning. It is no confession of mistake or remorse for the evil He has inflicted. But now that His righteous judgement has been executed, His attitude to His people is changed, and for the future He is prepared to build up those whom His justice has forced Him to pull down.

11. They not unnaturally feared that Nebuchadnezzar would

of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not
afraid of him, saith the LORD: for I am with you to save
12 you, and to deliver you from his hand. And I will grant
you mercy, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause
13 you to return to your own land. But if ye say, We will not
dwell in this land; so that ye obey not the voice of the
14 LORD your God; saying, No; but we will go into the
land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the
sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and
15 there will we dwell: [S] now therefore hear ye the word
of the LORD, O remnant of Judah: thus saith the LORD
of hosts, the God of Israel, If ye wholly set your faces to
16 enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there; then it shall
come to pass, that the sword, which ye fear, shall overtake
you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof
ye are afraid, [a] shall follow hard after you there in Egypt;
17 and there ye shall die. So shall it be with all the men
that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they
shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence:
and none of them shall remain or escape from the
18 evil that I will bring upon them. For thus saith the
LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; As mine anger and
my fury hath been poured forth upon the inhabitants of

[a] Heb. *shall cleave after you.*

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treat the murder of his representative as a new act of rebellion on the part of the incorrigible Jews, and exact vengeance without too nice a discrimination between the guilty and the innocent.

12. to return to your own land. Since they were in their own land at the time, we should no doubt point the text differently and read, with the Syriac and Vulgate, 'to dwell in your own land.'

14. The advantages of Egypt appeal to them as forcibly as they did to the Hebrews in the desert. After the stress of the past and the terror of the present, an idyllic future seems to lie before them. If 'war' has a definite reference, it may be to a punitive expedition sent by Babylon or to an attack led by Ishmael.

Jerusalem, so shall my fury be poured forth upon you,
when ye shall enter into Egypt: and ye shall be an
execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach;
and ye shall see this place no more. [B] The 19
LORD hath spoken concerning you, O remnant of Judah,
Go ye not into Egypt: know certainly that I have testified
unto you this day. For ye have dealt deceitfully [a] against 20
your own souls; for ye sent me unto the LORD your
God, saying, Pray for us unto the LORD our God; and
according unto all that the LORD our God shall say, so
declare unto us, and we will do it: and I have this day 21
declared it to you; but ye have not obeyed the voice of
the LORD your God in any thing for the which he hath
sent me unto you. Now therefore know certainly that ye 22
shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence,
in the place whither ye desire to go to sojourn
there.

And it came to pass that when Jeremiah had made an 43
end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the
LORD their God, wherewith the LORD their God had
sent him to them, even all these words, then spake 2
Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of

[a] Or, *in your souls*

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19. We should probably read 'This is the word of the LORD unto you' (so Targum, Symmachus, and Vulgate). If 15–18 is a subsequent insertion, this verse is then the apodosis to 13, 14. We should also insert, with the LXX, 'Now therefore' before 'know.' No explicit statement of their intention to disobey seems to have been needed. Jeremiah saw it in their faces.

20. dealt deceitfully against. The Hebrew is rather dubious. It would be better, with the LXX, to read 'ye have done evil against.' They are responsible for the evil which will follow, since they took the initiative in requesting Divine direction and spontaneously promised to obey it.

xliii. 1. The people heard Jeremiah to the end without interruption.

Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah,
Thou speakest falsely: the LORD our God hath not sent
thee to say, Ye shall not go into Egypt to sojourn there:
3 but Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against
us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans,
that they may put us to death, and carry us away captives
4 to Babylon. So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the
captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not
the voice of the LORD, to dwell in the land of Judah.
5 But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains

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2. and all the proud men, saying. The Hebrew for 'saying' is against the idiom of the language and not the usual expression; we should read 'defiant' (*hammōrīm* for *'ōmᵉrīm*), with Giesebrecht and others. The LXX omits 'proud,' and is followed by Cornill and Rothstein.

Thou speakest falsely. They do not, of course, mean to disobey Yahweh's word, but it runs so counter to their reason and their wishes that they will not believe that it is His word. Yet they do not venture to hint that Jeremiah has deliberately concocted the message and palmed it off on the people as Yahweh's oracle. Baruch has got the old man under his influence, and played on his senility, so that he attributes to heaven-sent inspiration what is due only to Baruch's sinister suggestion. Baruch had perhaps allowed his judgement on the flight into Egypt to become known. It is noteworthy that Jeremiah makes no answer. It would be precarious to argue that this was due to any doubt, which he had to solve through internal debate, and the solution of which was expressed in the scene at Tahpanhes recorded in 8–13. His certainty was not affected by the reception accorded to his message.

5. that . . . Judah. This is a strange expression, which would have been suitable to express a return from a world-wide dispersion, but not one from the neighbouring lands. The LXX reads simply 'that were returned to sojourn in the land.' This may well be the true reading, the Hebrew having arisen out of it through the almost mechanical addition by a heedless scribe of phraseology familiar in a different connexion. There is force in Cornill's remark that we do not expect in this verse a special category of the remnant, this comes in 6, but rather something which was characteristic of the whole remnant. Since in this passage 'sojourn' is used only with reference to Egypt, he thinks some such clause as 'who had set their faces to sojourn in the land of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all the nations whither they had been driven to sojourn in the land of Judah; the men, and 6 the women, and the children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah; and they came into the land of 7 Egypt; for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: and they came even to Tahpanhes. Then came the word 8

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of Egypt' would answer all requirements, but confesses himself at a loss to understand how the present text can have arisen out of it.

6. It is not clear whether Jeremiah and Baruch were forcibly carried into Egypt, or voluntarily accompanied the refugees. The latter would not be inconsistent with the prophet's protest. His vocation lifted him above the common duty. Just as he advised others to desert to the Chaldeans, but felt his own place to be in the doomed city to the last; so he may have counselled the remnant to remain in the land, but when they refused have felt it his duty to accompany them.

7. Tahpanhes: i. e. Daphne or Defenneh (ii. 16), a frontier city of Egypt, lying on the road out of Egypt to Palestine.

xliii. 8-13. JEREMIAH PREDICTS THAT NEBUCHADNEZZAR WILL CONQUER EGYPT.

Duhm regards this section as 'historically worthless Midrash,' but this judgement is not generally accepted. The passage presents real difficulties, but they are largely removed by textual criticism. As a frontier fortress Tahpanhes would quite naturally be taken by Nebuchadnezzar at an early stage of the invasion of Egypt. The narrative is probably from the pen of Baruch, but may have been touched by a later editor. It may be added that Erbt's discussion of the passage is especially suggestive, though it would be unwarrantable to suppose that the scene expressed any re-establishment of the prophet's conviction as to the flight into Egypt which had been shaken by the accusation that Baruch, not Yahweh, was the source of it (see note on 2).

xliii. 8-13. While Jeremiah was in Tahpanhes Yahweh bade him take great stones and bury them at the entry of Pharaoh's house, in the sight of the Jews, and tell them in His name that He

9 of the LORD unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes, saying, Take

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will bring His servant Nebuchadnezzar, who shall set his throne over the buried stones. He shall smite Egypt, and burn the temples of its gods, and treat the land of Egypt as a shepherd treats his garment, and break the obelisks of Beth-shemesh.

xliii. 8. The revelation seems to have come to Jeremiah soon after the arrival at Tahpanhes. The company would probably have to halt there to receive permission to proceed.

9. The text is probably corrupt. The words rendered 'and hide them in mortar in the brickwork' have occasioned much difficulty; Graf in fact found all the explanations offered so unsatisfactory that he was tempted to think that the action was not really performed, a view taken by some scholars with reference to the symbolic actions recorded in Ezekiel. This, however, must not be accepted here. The LXX read a different text, 'in the forecourt;' the other Greek Versions and the Vulgate a different text again. Moreover the two words in the Hebrew are suspiciously alike; one of them occurs nowhere else, and the other only in Neh. iii. 14 and possibly 2 Sam. xii. 31. Gillies thinks the scribe intended to write the second word, but by a slip wrote the first, and then without crossing it out wrote the word he had meant to write. More probably, however, we should strike out the second word as due to dittography of the first, and then emend the first word by omitting a consonant, reading 'in secret' for 'in mortar,' with the Vulgate and the Greek Versions other than the LXX. The clause would then run 'and hide them in secret at the entry,' &c. Probably, as Erbt and Cornill think, the incident occurred at night. This is not negatived by the clause 'in sight of the men of Judah,' for in Ezek. xii. 1-16 we have a similar sign enacted by night in the sight of 'the rebellious house:' cf. especially 'I brought it forth in the dark, and bare it upon my shoulder in their sight' (Ezek. xii. 7, cf. 6). It is before a company of Jews and not the whole population of the city that the mysterious sign is enacted. The aged prophet painfully carries large stones to the entrance of Pharaoh's house and, as the wondering Jews look on, buries them before it. The uncanny scene enacted under cover of the night soon receives its explanation. The Jews have come to Egypt to escape from Nebuchadnezzar. But the king's long arm will at length reach them there. He will invade Egypt and above these very stones will erect his throne. The act of the prophet is no mere sign. Just as the prophetic word, once uttered, moves forward to effect its own fulfilment, so the prophetic deed is not simply a prediction, it sets in motion the train of events which is to lead up to its realization. To an audience familiar with this almost magical efficacy of prophets' words and acts, an great stones in thine hand, and [a] hide them in mortar in the brickwork, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah; and say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the 10 God of Israel: Behold, I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid; and he shall spread his [b] royal pavilion over them. And he shall 11 come, and shall smite the land of Egypt; such as are for death *shall be given* to death, and such as are for captivity to captivity, and such as are for the sword to the sword. And I will kindle a fire in the houses of 12

[a] Or, *lay them with mortar in the pavement* (or *square*)

[b] †Or, *glittering*

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act of this kind must have appealed with a force we can hardly imagine. They would feel themselves to be present when new forces were being released; they stood at the fountain-head of a new current in history.

at the entry of Pharaoh's house. This is generally regarded as a royal palace, and the question has been raised whether Jeremiah could have ventured on this action. More probably it was not a palace in the strict sense of the term, but a house used for the royal residence if the king happened to visit Tahpanhes, as in view of its military importance he would do at times. And the stones would not be buried within the residence itself but in front of it. The scene of the prophet's operations may have been the brick pavement by the fort excavated by Prof. Petrie in 1886. But if we omit 'in the brickwork' one ground for the identification disappears, and it is not probable that the prophet would have to remove part of a pavement before he buried the stones.

10. and will set: LXX and Syriac better, 'he shall set.'

royal pavilion. The Hebrew word occurs only here. The root may mean 'beautiful,' 'brilliant.' The word must express here something appertaining to the king's royal state, it may mean the pavilion or perhaps the carpet on which his throne was placed. The order of the clauses rather favours the view that the pavilion is meant, since the spreading of the carpet would precede the placing of the throne.

11. Cf. xv. 2.

12. I will kindle: read, with LXX, Syr., and Vulg., 'he will kindle.'

the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment;
13 and he shall go forth from thence in peace. He shall also break the [a] pillars of [b] Beth-shemesh, that is in the

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[a] †Or, *obelisks* [b] Or, *The house of the sun* Probably, *Heliopolis* or *On*.

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he shall array . . . garment. This is a difficult clause, and very variously interpreted. The word rendered 'array himself' means usually 'to wrap oneself,' and many abide by this sense here. The point, however, is by no means clear. The best representatives of this view take it to be the ease with which the king of Babylon will possess himself of the land of Egypt. But the idea of clothing oneself in a country is very strange, and the point of the comparison ought to have been clearly expressed. Hitzig and Duhm think the meaning is that just as a shepherd reverses his mantle, wearing now the inside of the fleece and now the outside next the skin, according as the weather is cold or hot, so the king of Babylon will reverse things in Egypt, turn them upside down. This sense, however, is very dubious. Others prefer the rendering 'roll up;' the point is then that the conqueror takes up Egypt and its possessions as easily as the shepherd rolls up his mantle with all it contains and carries it with him. The LXX has a peculiar rendering to the effect that Nebuchadnezzar will treat Egypt as a shepherd cleanses his vermin-infested garment, picking off the objectionable inmates one by one. He can do this deliberately and thoroughly, since he has plenty of leisure. The metaphor is not one which would commend itself to the taste of the present day, but in itself it is vigorous and effective, expressing Jeremiah's contempt for the Egyptians and his recognition of Nebuchadnezzar's military power. This rendering is accepted by Cornill, von Gall, and Rothstein.

13. This verse is regarded by some as an addition, since after Nebuchadnezzar is said in 12 to leave Egypt in peace, it is out of place to return to his destruction of the obelisks and temples. Rothstein escapes this objection by inserting 13^a after 12^a, and striking out 13^b as a repetition of 12^a.

the pillars . . . Egypt. If the text is correct, Beth-shemesh is probably a proper name, to be identified, as the margin says, with Heliopolis or On. The clause 'that is in the land of Egypt,' is probably a gloss intended to distinguish the place mentioned from the Beth-shemesh in Palestine, a distinction quite needless for the writer to have made. The LXX has 'that is in On,' so probably did not take Beth-shemesh as a proper name, but under-land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of Egypt shall he burn with fire.

[BS] The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all 44

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stood the whole clause to mean 'the temple of the sun which is in On.' Heliopolis was a city about six miles north-east of Cairo. It was famous for its temple of the sun, and the avenue of obelisks in front of it. 'Cleopatra's Needle' was one of these obelisks; of the rest one only remains in its place. Others are in Rome, Constantinople, and Paris.

The question whether Nebuchadnezzar actually invaded Egypt has been much discussed, but a fragmentary inscription of his shows that in 568 B. C. such an invasion did take place, in which the Egyptian king Amasis was defeated. At that time Jeremiah is hardly likely to have been still alive.

xliv. JEREMIAH TESTIFIES AGAINST THE WORSHIP OF THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN.

This section, painful though it is to see the rebellious temper which animated the people to the last, is of great historical interest. The effect of the disasters which had come so thickly upon the people was not unnaturally that many felt themselves dispensed from the service of a God who could not or would not help them. In a most instructive passage in Ezekiel we read of those who, while the city and Temple were still standing, practised a degraded form of idolatry, saying 'Yahweh seeth us not; Yahweh hath forsaken the land' (Ezek. viii. 12). Similarly the refugees in Egypt argued quite plausibly, it is only since the finding of the Book of the Law and the introduction of new-fangled ideas and suppression of older forms of worship that misfortunes have overwhelmed us. The practical inference they drew was that they would do well to resume the cults they had abandoned, and enjoy the prosperity which had been their lot in those days of religious breadth and material prosperity. The present chapter is based on Baruch's memoirs, but it has received not a little expansion. It is noteworthy that no information is given us at the outset as to the occasion, and that we have to infer the situation from what is told us in the latter part of the chapter. The address of Jeremiah (2-14) is largely made up of phraseology such as is elsewhere familiar to us in the book. But even in this we may recognize that the drift of the prophet's argument is correctly reproduced.

xliv. 1-10. Jeremiah spoke to the Jews in Egypt as follows: You have seen how Yahweh has made Jerusalem and Judah desolate for the idolatry they practised, though He sent His the Jews which dwelt in the land of Egypt, which dwelt

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prophets to warn them. Why then are you doing evil by practising idolatry in Egypt, to bring utter ruin on yourselves? Have you forgotten the sin of your fathers and your own sin?

11–14. Therefore Yahweh will cut off the remnant of Judah that is in Egypt, so that none shall return but fugitives.

15–19. Then the assembly replied that they would not hearken; but they would perform their vow to worship the Queen of Heaven, as they had done in Judah, for then all was well with them. But since they had abandoned her worship, disaster had been their portion. And the worship offered by the women had been with the consent of their husbands.

20–28. Jeremiah replied, Yahweh took note of your idolatrous worship, till He could bear it no longer, hence the desolation of your land and the evil you are suffering. So since you hold fast your vows to worship the Queen of Heaven, do so; but know that Yahweh will slay all the Jews in Egypt, so that only very few shall return to the land of Judah. Then it will be known whose word shall stand.

29–30. And the sign shall be that Pharaoh Hophra shall be given into the power of his foes.

xliv. 1. The place where the incident occurred is not named, but only the localities from which the assembly was drawn. The clause mentioning these is struck out by several as probably a later insertion, and the presence of Jews from Pathros, i. e. Upper Egypt, asserted in 15 (see note), is surprising. As we know from the recently discovered Aramaic papyri, there was a colony of Jews in Pathros, and some of these may have been present. Moreover xxiv. 8 justifies the view that even before the fall of Jerusalem there was a body of Jews in Egypt. It is possible that some of these had come to Tahpanhes to meet the fugitives. But the impression made by the narrative is rather that some time had elapsed since their arrival. Not all at once is the reversion to heathenism likely to have been accomplished. True, the people had acted in defiance of Jeremiah's exhortations; yet this had not been in their minds rebellion against Yahweh, but a refusal to recognize the prophet as His spokesman. The stage they had now reached did not involve a formal renunciation of Yahweh, but a recognition of other deities as legitimate objects of worship. But after the Deuteronomic Reformation it was a distinct repudiation of the principles on which it had rested. It was thus a reversion to the pre-Reformation standpoint, but it was a sin against light to a greater degree than the idolatry of the earlier period. In fairness, however, it must be admitted that from the popular standpoint not a little was to be said for the view that the Reformation had proved a disaster.

at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the
country of Pathros, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, 2
the God of Israel: Ye have seen all the evil that I have
brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah;
and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man
dwelleth therein; because of their wickedness which 3
they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that
they went to burn incense, *and* to serve other gods,
whom they knew not, neither they, nor ye, nor your
fathers. Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the 4
prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Oh,
do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they 5
hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their
wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. Where- 6
fore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was
kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of
Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as it is
this day. Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God 7

Migdol was another frontier town a little to the east of Tahpanhes, now known as Tell es-Sêrnut. It lay on the high road from Asia into Egypt, and is to be distinguished from the Migdol of Exod. xiv. 2. For Noph see on ii. 16. Pathros is Upper Egypt. The Egyptian name Pa-to-ris means 'Land of the South.'

2. The occasion of the address is not defined, as no doubt it would be in Baruch's memoirs, but apparently it was some religious festival at which Jews of the neighbouring localities had come together; the people began their preparations for the worship of the Queen of Heaven (vii. 18), and thus called forth the prophet's denunciation. The prophet's address has probably been a good deal edited, but no satisfactory construction of the original is now possible.

3–5. The fluctuation between the second and third person may be due partly to textual corruption, partly to expansion.

burn incense: better 'to offer sacrifice' (see note on i. 16), and so throughout the chapter. For the latter part of the verse cf. xix. 4.

4. Cf. vii. 25, xxv. 4, &c.

6. Cf. vii. 20, xxxiii. 10, xlii. 18.

7. against your own souls: cf. xxvi. 19.

of hosts, the God of Israel: Wherefore commit ye *this*
great evil against your own souls, to cut off from you
man and woman, infant and suckling, out of the midst
8 of Judah, to leave you none remaining; in that ye provoke
me unto anger with the works of your hands,
burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt,
whither ye be gone to sojourn; that ye may be cut off,
and that ye may be a curse and a reproach among all
9 the nations of the earth? Have ye forgotten the wickedness
of your fathers, and the wickedness of the kings of
Judah, and the wickedness of their wives, and your own
wickedness, and the wickedness of your wives, which
they committed in the land of Judah, and in the streets
10 of Jerusalem? They are not humbled even unto this
day, neither have they feared, nor walked in my law,
nor in my statutes, that I set before you and before your
11 fathers. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the
God of Israel: Behold, I will set my face against you
12 for evil, even to cut off all Judah. And I will take the
remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into
the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all
be consumed; in the land of Egypt shall they fall; they
shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine;
they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by
the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an
execration, *and* an astonishment, and a curse, and a
13 reproach. For I will punish them that dwell in the land
of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword,
14 by the famine, and by the pestilence: so that none of
the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land
of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that

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9. their wives: read, with LXX, 'their princes.'

they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they [a]have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return save such as shall escape.

[B] Then all the men which knew that their wives 15 burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great assembly, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto 16 us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly perform every word that is 17 gone forth out of our mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of [b]victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn 18

[a] Heb. *lift up their soul.* [b] Heb. *bread.*

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12. Cf. xlii. 18.

15. a great assembly: Duhm reads 'with a loud voice' (*qōl* for *qāhāl*).

in Pathros: see on 1. We should read 'and in Pathros,' with the Syriac, explaining Egypt as Lower Egypt; but regard the whole clause 'even . . . Pathros' as an insertion, since it is very unlikely that Jews, especially women, had come from Upper Egypt.

17. the queen of heaven: i. e. Ishtar; see note on vii. 18.

18. since we left off: i. e. apparently at the time of the Reformation, though some think the worship of Ishtar had been resumed in the reign of Jehoiakim; see on this question vol. i, p. 150. The misfortunes that had fallen upon them in quick succession: the untimely death of Josiah; the Egyptian suzerainty and deportation of Jehoahaz to Egypt; the captivity of Jehoiachin and the flower of the nation; the horrors of the second siege; the capture and destruction of Jerusalem; the blinding of the king and execution of so many of the princes; the captivity to Babylon; the murder of Gedaliah and the flight into Egypt; all the long tragic catalogue they naturally from their standpoint attributed to the wrath of the neglected Queen of Heaven.

incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have
19 been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to [a] worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto
20 her, without our husbands? [S] Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, even to all the people which had given him that answer, saying,
21 The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye and your fathers, your kings and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the Lord remember them, and came it not into his mind?
22 so that the Lord could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations

[a] †Or, *pourtray*

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19. From the close of the verse it is clear that the women are speaking, but the Hebrew text of 15 treats the whole speech 16–19 as spoken by the men and the women. The Syriac inserts at the beginning of this verse 'And all the women answered and said.' Whether we should read this, making of course, the consequential change of masculine into feminine in the Hebrew; or whether we should strike out the reference to the men in 15 and so make the whole of 16–19 an address of the women, changing the masculines into feminines throughout, is uncertain; the latter course is perhaps preferable.

to worship her: better, as in margin, 'to pourtray her;' see vol. i, p. 151.

without our husbands: According to the law of vows, Num. xxx. 4–17, women needed their husbands' consent before their vows were valid. The law in its present written form is late, but it probably, like so much in the late legislation, embodies ancient practice. The point is that they have fulfilled the conditions requisite for a vow. If Jeremiah complains, the implication may be, let him settle the matter with the husbands.

20–23 is regarded as secondary by Duhm, who is followed by several scholars. The original answer he finds in 24 ff., the present passage simply reproducing the contents of 2–14.

21. The incense: better 'The sacrifice.'

which ye have committed; therefore is your land become a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without inhabitant, as it is this day. Because ye have burned 23 incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as it is this day.

[B] Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and 24 to all the women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt: thus saith the LORD of 25 hosts, the God of Israel, saying: Ye and your wives have both spoken with your mouths, and with your hands have fulfilled it, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: establish then

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24. all Judah . . . Egypt: omitted by LXX, probably rightly.

25. Ye and your wives: read with LXX, 'Ye women.' The Hebrew shows that the women are addressed. Ironically he bids them perform their idolatrous vows. We should perhaps read 'establish your words.'

26–28. In its present form the text implies that Yahweh's name will not be used in Egypt by any Jew (26), since all the Jews in Egypt will be completely destroyed (27); a few will escape into Judah, and the Jewish remnant that has come into Egypt shall know whose word shall stand (28). The representation does not hang well together; we have the definite statement of complete extermination modified by the prediction that some will return to Judah, and the wording of 28^b most naturally suggests that the Jews who are in Egypt will know whose word stands, though this remnant has disappeared. We have a similar contradiction in 14. Duhm thinks that in its original form Jeremiah continued his ironical address: 'And let Yahweh's name be no more spoken in the oath, As Yahweh liveth,' meaning let them abandon the worship of Yahweh altogether. Similarly Erbt and Cornill. This was changed into the prediction in the present text; 27 was added in explanation. 28^a was added by the hand to which we owe 14^b, but 28^b is substantially from the memoirs giving the close of Jeremiah's address.

26 your vows, and perform your vows. [BS] Therefore
hear ye the word of the Lord, all Judah that dwell in
the land of Egypt: Behold, I have sworn by my great
name, saith the Lord, that my name shall no more be
named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land
27 of Egypt, saying, As the Lord God liveth. Behold,
I watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all
the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be
consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there
28 be an end of them. And they that escape the sword shall
return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah,
few in number; and all the remnant of Judah, that are
gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know
29 whose word shall stand, mine, or theirs. And this shall
be the sign unto you, saith the Lord, that I will punish
you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall
30 surely stand against you for evil: thus saith the Lord:
Behold, I will give Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt
into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them
that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into
the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy,
and that sought his life.

29, 30. According to the statement of Herodotus (ii. 161–163, 169), Hophra or, as Herodotus calls him, Apries, in consequence of an unsuccessful expedition against Cyrene, was dethroned by Amasis, who although desirous of sparing him, had to give him up to the people, who strangled him. This narrative is accepted by many scholars, but rejected by Wiedemann, who is followed by Cornill. If the story is correct, the present prophecy in its apparent distinction of the enemies of Hophra from Nebuchadnezzar agrees with history, so closely in fact that several regard it as either composed or brought into its present form after the event. The reign of Hophra ended about 570 B.C. In 568, when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt, Amasis was on the throne. Hophra's death took place in 564.

[B] The word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto **45**

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xlv. Rebuke and Promise Addressed to Baruch.

According to the title this oracle dates from the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when the prophet's secretary wrote the roll. Its authenticity was doubted by Reuss and Schwally, but it has been accepted by all recent expositors. Its apparently insignificant character is enough to refute the theory that it is a work of imagination. But several writers do not accept the fourth year of Jehoiakim as the date of its origin. It contemplates a life of exile for Baruch as impending or already begun. Trouble upon trouble had already been his portion. In the fourth year of Jehoiakim the prophet rather contemplated the possibility that his people might repent and exile be averted. Its position in the book is also thought to indicate a later origin. Duhm says its proper place would have been after xxxvi. 4, but it is not probable that xxxvi included anything of the kind. These arguments, however, are by no means decisive. It is true that Jeremiah wrote the roll in the hope that his people might repent, but though it was his duty to hope against hope and labour to the last, he was under no illusion as to the likelihood of repentance. He expected the worst. And the contents of the roll were such as to fill Baruch with the liveliest sorrow for the doom that was hanging over the nation; it was composed entirely of oracles of denunciation and disaster, such as ought to have caused its hearers to rend their clothes, and which actually roused the king to a fury that would have been fatal not simply to the roll itself, but to author and scribe. And a personal prophecy of this kind would have been quite out of place in xxxvi. It would have ruined the progress of the narrative by introducing an irrelevant element, when all attention was to be concentrated on the effect produced by the roll. Its position at the close of Baruch's memoirs is to be explained by the author's modesty rather than by chronological considerations. These arguments, then, do not negative the evidence of the title. It must be owned, however, that the title itself presents difficulties. The clause 'when he wrote these words' should refer to a prophecy or narrative which immediately precedes; hence it might be argued that xlv really succeeded xliv in point of time, since we may not unreasonably suppose that its position at the end of the memoirs was due to Baruch himself. But this simply means that the data of the title are conflicting, and it is much less violent to read 'the words' than to strike out the date. So far as the contents of the chapter are concerned they might suit a later date, whether in the closing years of Zedekiah, as Köberle thinks, or after the destruction of Jerusalem, as Giesebrecht, Duhm, Erbt, and Gillies suppose. Cornill, who has written by far the most penetrating and sugges-

Baruch the son of Neriah, when he wrote these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year

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tive study of the chapter, holds fast to the date in the title, and thinks that only thus does the real significance of the oracle get its true appreciation. He sets aside as unworthy the interpretation that Baruch was complaining over his personal troubles and the uncertainty of earning a livelihood. Rather it is the writing of the roll which has filled him with pain. Is there then no hope for anything better? Will Yahweh not repent once more of the evil He thinks of doing to His people? Truly a great thing to ask, but then is not Yahweh He who does great things? It was no ignoble feeling which prompted his complaint, but love to his people and belief in God's mercy. But he failed to see that while it was possible for love and mercy to achieve their end, God would not have denied them scope. For He was the Creator, it was He who had planted, He who had built up. Certainly He did not destroy His own work wantonly or with indifference, but only with pain; if He brings Himself to do it, then no alternative remains to be tried. Man can do nothing but be silent in the presence of so reluctant a resolve. The disaster which is threatened cannot be averted from the guilty people, but Baruch's own life should be spared. With full sympathy Jeremiah entered into the feelings of his disciple; he too had gone through the same experience, and had schooled himself into acceptance of the will of God. Cornill brings out strongly the immense significance of the thought, here for the first time expressed, that the Creator, just because He is the Creator, must be filled with love for His creation. Here it is applied simply to Judah; in Job x. 8 ff. it is extended to the individual man; in Jonah iv. 11 it is expressed in all its greatness and splendour. The interpretation given by Cornill yields a worthy sense, and the present writer can do no other than accept it in the main. He questions, however, whether the language, and especially the exhortation not to seek great things for himself, does not imply an element of personal self-seeking which Cornill does not recognize. While he also agrees that the date in the title is to be preferred, he thinks that the oracle might still bear the same deep meaning if it dated from a later period in Baruch's career.

xlv. 1–5. The word spoken to Baruch when he wrote the roll. Thou hast said, Sorrow is added to my pain, and I find no rest. I am breaking down what I have built, and plucking up what I have planted. And seek no great thing for thyself; I am bringing evil on all flesh, but thy life shall be preserved.

xlv. 1. The title creates difficulties which have been touched upon in the Introduction to the section. 'These words' do not

of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying,
Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel [a] unto thee, 2
O Baruch: Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the 3
LORD hath added sorrow to my pain; [b] I am weary
with my groaning, and I find no rest. Thus shalt thou 4
say unto him, Thus saith the LORD: Behold, that which
I have built will I break down, and that which I have
planted I will pluck up; and this in the whole land.
And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: 5

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[a] †Or, *concerning* [b] See Ps. vi. 6.

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suit the memoirs, for Baruch did not write these at the dictation of Jeremiah, nor yet the roll written in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, for that roll was destroyed. Cornill thinks Baruch may have said, 'when I wrote the words of Jeremiah.'

3. Baruch's thoughts are cast in a poetical form; we may suppose that he had expressed them in writing and that Jeremiah had seen his composition. To pain for the fate which hung over his people was added anxiety as to his own lot.

4. Thus . . . him. These words do not harmonize with the preceding, in which Baruch himself, not Jeremiah, is addressed. The simplest expedient is to omit them.

The significance of Yahweh's words is explained in the Introduction to the chapter. If He destroy His own work it can only be with pain and reluctance, and because no alternative is open to Him. If Baruch is oppressed with sorrow, what must be Yahweh's pain?

and this in the whole land. These words are absent in the LXX, and the Hebrew is strange. Probably they are a gloss, intended to explain what it was that Yahweh was destroying. For 'land' it would be better to render 'earth.'

5. It is difficult to avoid the impression that Baruch is here warned against undue personal claims, and in this respect Cornill's otherwise penetrating interpretation seems scarcely to do justice to the terms of the passage. But some of the suggestions made as to the form his claims took are wide of the mark. There is no hint that he expected to play a great part in the affairs of state, or to become a prophet. His desires were rather quite moderate; but in such a time the most ordinary desires may be excessive. He must be satisfied to escape with bare life and a wandering existence. It is noteworthy that in His word to Baruch, Yahweh displays the same sternness, the same exacting demand, the same lack of sympathy and appreciation as to Jeremiah. We may say that what for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

46 [R] The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the nations.

Baruch achieved by giving to the world his memoirs of Jeremiah was a far greater thing than his most soaring ambition had ever contemplated. Erbt has a very ingenious theory as to the origin of the section. He thinks that it was written after Baruch had finished writing the memoirs of Jeremiah, and that after so much pain, Yahweh still prepares new woes, a Babylonian conquest for the remnant in Egypt. The prophet's days are wellnigh done, but a future still lies before Baruch, not of rest but of toil and constant movement. Separation from his beloved master is impending; for Jeremiah is sending him to Babylon, there to continue his work among the exiles. To Babylon he went and published the story of his master's work. He heard no more of the prophet, hence we learn nothing of the end of his career. This theory, however, does not give any adequate meaning to the Divine reply to his complaint.

xlvi–li. ORACLES AGAINST FOREIGN NATIONS.

The prophecies contained in these chapters have in recent years been wholly or largely denied to Jeremiah. The most thorough attack on their authenticity was made by Schwally in Stade's *Zeitschrift* for 1888. The same conclusion has been reached by Stade, Wellhausen, and Duhm. Other scholars have recognized interpolation, more or less extensive, while contending for a genuine Jeremianic nucleus. A very general agreement has been reached, especially since Budde's discussion in the *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, 1878, that the Oracle against Babylon (l. 1—li. 58) is not authentic, though Orelli dissents from this and Rothstein considers that even it may contain some Jeremianic matter. As to xlvi–xlix opinion is greatly divided. Even A. B. Davidson and Köberle consider that the chapters contain a considerable non-Jeremianic element, and critics like Kuenen, Giesebrecht, and Erbt naturally adopt, though with considerable difference in detail, a very similar position. Among recent writers Cornill has the merit of giving the most searching discussion. He claims for Jeremiah a much larger proportion than Giesebrecht does. The question has to be settled for each oracle, but certain general objections to the prophecies considered as a whole call for examination at this point.

Of Egypt: concerning the army of Pharaoh-neco king 2
of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish,

The objection that Jeremiah was not a prophet to the nations has been already discussed (vol. i, pp. 77, 78), and need not detain us. Assuming that, like the older prophets (xxviii. 8), he too was commissioned to speak 'against many countries and against great kingdoms,' we naturally anticipate that such prophecies may be found in the book. We cannot eliminate them on the baseless assumption that Jeremiah was conscious of no mission save to his own people. What then are the positive arguments in disproof of authenticity? Schwally complains that the conception of God is quite other than Jeremiah's; in these chapters He appears throughout as the vengeful Deity, who has dedicated the heathen to unalterable destruction. But the idea of Divine vengeance is not strange to Jeremiah (cf. v. 9, 29); and apart from this it is not really present in these prophecies except in xlvi. 10; though the idea of Divine judgement is, of course, present, and in accordance with the belief that Yahweh stands behind the events of history, the calamities that fall on the nations are assigned to His causation. When Schwally adds that there is no preaching of repentance, apart from which prophecy is unthinkable, we remember Habakkuk and Nahum, and ask what Hebrew prophet ever felt himself called to preach repentance to the heathen? Only in the very late Book of Jonah is there the suggestion of such an idea; but Jonah is a representative of Israel as the Servant of Yahweh entrusted with a mission to the Gentile world. The absence of explicit reference to affairs in Judah, which is another objection, would be amazing if the prophet had not dealt with them over and over again; as it is, such an objection is unmeaning. Nor is it the case that what lies behind the prophecies is simply the antithesis between the people of God and the heathen as such, which was the creation of the exile; or that the author knows nothing of the concrete relations of the peoples. The literary dependence of the prophecies in their present form on post-Jeremianic writings is not to be denied. But this and all the other arguments taken together prove nothing more than that the prophecies are not wholly authentic. They do not forbid us to recognize a substantial Jeremianic nucleus, which has undergone expansion at the hand of later editors. The question whether such an authentic nucleus can be discovered, and, if so, what limits should be set to it, can be answered only through a detailed investigation of the oracles themselves. On their original position in the Book of Jeremiah see the Introduction to xxv. The order of the prophecies differs in the Hebrew and the LXX. It is now generally agreed that the former should be preferred.

which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah.

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xlvi. THE OVERTHROW OF EGYPT.

This chapter contains two main divisions: (a) 2–12, (b) 13–28. The former is dated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and its occasion is said to be the defeat of the army of Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish. (On this epoch-making event and its consequences, see vol. i, pp. 18–20.) A prophecy on Egypt, at such a juncture, is what would naturally be expected. Egypt was Judah's suzerain; Babylon the long-announced foe out of the north. In this year the prophet was commissioned to give the nations the cup of Yahweh's fury to drink, and the first of the heathen powers to drink was Egypt (xxv. 15–19). The objections to the authenticity are partly aesthetic; the movement of the piece is not straightforward, but we pass to and fro between the preparation for the fight and its issue. Cornill, on the contrary, considers the description, when restored to its original form, most effective. Literary dependence on post-Jeremianic passages cannot be proved, it may in each case lie on the other side. Nor are the ideas such as are inconsistent with Jeremiah's authorship. Giesebrecht rather grudgingly grants that there may be a genuine nucleus, 'of which remains may be preserved e.g. in verses 7, 8, 5, 6.' But he seems more inclined to regard the whole as an early post-exilic composition. We should probably, however, regard the whole as substantially genuine.

The second oracle, 13–28, is decisively rejected by Giesebrecht on grounds which Cornill regards as so slight that he does not even name them. The same repetition and absence of clear development of the theme, the looseness of the connexion, the absurdity of the metaphor in 18, the impossibility of attributing 26 to Jeremiah, are the main points enumerated by Giesebrecht. Largely they are objections which can be rightly estimated only in a detailed study of the passage. Its date, assuming it to be substantially authentic, is uncertain. It is quite possible that it belongs to the same period as 3–12. But it may date from Jeremiah's residence in Egypt, when he anticipated an invasion by Nebuchadnezzar (xliii. 8–13). This date would be certain if, as Cornill asserts, 17 contained a word-play on the name Hophra (see note).

xlvi. 1. Title to the Oracles concerning the Nations.

2. Concerning the army of Pharaoh smitten at Carchemish by Nebuchadnezzar.

3-6. Let the soldiers make ready for the battle. Why do they turn back? They are smitten and flee in terror. They have fallen by the Euphrates.

[J] Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to 3
battle. Harness the horses, and get up, ye horsemen, 4

7–12. Who rises up like the Nile? It is Egypt, boasting that it will cover the earth. Horses, chariots, warriors, tribes go forth to battle. But it is Yahweh's day of vengeance; there is no healing for Egypt's wound. The earth is full of Egypt's cry for its fall.

13. Title of an Oracle on Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of Egypt.

14–19. Let Egypt prepare for the conflict. Yahweh has overthrown the strong one. The strangers exhort each other to escape to their own country. Call the name of Pharaoh a Crash. One comes eminent as Tabor among the mountains. Let the Egyptians prepare for exile.

20–26. Egypt is a fair heifer, stung by a gadfly; her warriors are like well-fed cowardly calves, they have fled before the enemy. Egypt is like a serpent in the wood before an army of woodcutters. Her dense forest shall be cut down, since it cannot be searched out. Egypt is conquered by the northern people. It will be delivered into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, but shall ultimately be restored as of old.

27, 28. Fear not, Jacob, Servant of Yahweh, for thou shalt be restored and rest in thy land. I will utterly destroy the nations of thy dispersion, but thee I will only chastise.

xlvi. 1. A title to the whole group of oracles.

2. The only part of the verse which belongs to the original oracle is the first words, which are better rendered 'On Egypt;' similarly in the titles to some of the other oracles. The rest of the verse is a note of great historical value, since it alone gives us independent information as to the site of the battle. On Pharaoh Necho see vol. i, pp. 15–19. His reign lasted 610–594 B. C. Carchemish is not Circesium (which lies at the junction of the Chaboras and the Euphrates), with which it used to be identified; but Gargamish, as the Assyrian inscriptions call it, now known as Dschirbâs (other spellings are Dscherâbis, Jerâbis, Jirbas, Girbas). It lies on the right bank of the Euphrates, north of Circesium and a little to the north of the junction of the Sagur with the Euphrates. It had been famous as the capital of the Hittites. Nebuchadnezzar was crown prince at the time, but succeeded his father Nabopolassar a little later.

3. The poet, without any preliminary description, plunges us into the heart of the situation. It is the eve of battle, and he bids the warriors make ready for the fray. 'The buckler' is the small rounded shield, the 'shield' is the long shield which protected the whole body.

4. get up, ye horsemen. This is the traditional rendering, but

and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears,
5 put on the coats of mail. Wherefore have I seen it? they are dismayed and are turned backward; and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: terror is on every side, saith the LORD.
6 Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; in the north by the river Euphrates have they stumbled
7 and fallen. [a] Who is this that riseth up like the Nile,
8 whose waters toss themselves like the rivers? Egypt riseth up like the Nile, and his waters toss themselves like the rivers: and he saith, I will rise up, I will cover

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[a] Or, *Who is this like the Nile that riseth up, like the rivers whose waters toss themselves? Egypt is like the Nile that riseth up &c.*

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most recent commentators render 'mount the steeds.' The command 'furbish the spears' comes in strangely as a direction on the eve of an engagement, and the text has often been suspected. The LXX may have read 'lift high your spears.' Cornill suggests 'arm yourselves with spears' (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 7).

coats of mail. These 'may have consisted of some thick woven material covered with metal scales' (*Enc. Bib.* 606).

5. No sooner are the preparations complete and the battle joined than the army is put to flight.

Wherefore have I seen it? The Hebrew is difficult. The LXX rightly omits the verb, 'Wherefore are they dismayed?' &c. If it is retained, it would be better to render 'Wherefore do I see them to be dismayed?'

terror is on every side: a characteristic expression of Jeremiah's; here very appropriate and effective: see note on vi. 25.

7. The Egyptians were smitten in the north, by Jeremiah's foe from the north, on the banks of the Euphrates. And now, in fine contrast to the Euphrates, comes the Nile. Isaiah had spoken of the waters of the Euphrates, strong and many, overflowing the banks and sweeping into Judah, threatening the very life of the Jewish people (Isa. viii. 7, 8). Jeremiah speaks of the Nile rising, while the waters of its branches toss themselves. The rising of the Nile worked no havoc, but was the condition of its country's fertility. It therefore did not suggest military conquest, like the flooding of the Euphrates, and is aptly chosen as a symbol of Egypt's hollow military pretensions.

8. and his waters . . . rivers: omitted in LXX; several critics strike out also the first clause of the verse. The LXX also

the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof. Go up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and 9
let the mighty men go forth: Cush and Put, that handle the shield; and the Ludim, that handle and bend the
bow. For that day is *a day* of the Lord, the LORD 10
of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour and be satiate, and shall drink its fill of their blood: for the Lord, the LORD of hosts, hath a sacrifice in the north country by

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omits 'the city and,' to the improvement of the sense. It may have arisen out of a reminiscence of xlvii. 2. If it is retained, it is best explained as collective, 'cities,' rather than as referring to any city in particular.

9. This verse may be a continuation of Pharaoh's words, or it may be the prophet himself who incites the contingents of the Egyptian army to the battle which is to end in such swift irretrievable disaster. The former view seems to be preferable. The king urges his hosts to the battle to fulfil his proud boast in the preceding verse. Let the horses prance, let the chariots rush furiously forward, let the soldiers advance to the conflict.

Cush: i. e. Ethiopia. **Put** is probably Punt, a land on the Red Sea. Cush and Put both occur as 'sons of Ham' in Gen. x. 6. The mercenaries from these countries formed the heavy-armed soldiers, and **the Ludim** the archers. The Ludim seem to have been a Libyan people on the west of Egypt; perhaps we should read Lubim, i. e. Libyans, as in Nah. iii. 9, 'Put and Lubim were thy helpers' (Stade). In any case they are not the Lydians of Asia Minor. The three peoples are mentioned similarly in Ezek. xxx. 5.

handle and bend the bow. It would be better to read simply 'bend the bow,' literally 'tread the bow;' 'handle' is a careless repetition from the previous clause.

10. In this verse a note of vengeance is struck, which is not strange when we consider that the untimely death of Josiah and the captivity of Jehoahaz had happened only a few years earlier at Egypt's hands. The passage is very similar to Isa. xxxiv. 6, 8; but, since Isa. xxxiv is a late composition, our passage is probably the original: cf. Zeph. i. 7, Ezek. xxxix. 17-20. The sword is the sword of the enemy, not of Yahweh as the LXX reads under the influence of Isa. xxxiv. 6. Coste (p. 7) prefers the LXX, regarding the Hebrew text as 'due to dogmatic alteration, occasioned by dislike of such an anthropomorphism as "the sword of Yahweh"' (so also xlix. 37, and perhaps xlvii. 6).

11 the river Euphrates. Go up into Gilead, and take balm,
O virgin daughter of Egypt: in vain dost thou use many
12 medicines; there is no healing for thee. The nations
have heard of thy shame, and the earth is full of thy cry:
for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty,
they are fallen both of them together.

13 [**R**] The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come and smite the land of Egypt.

14 [J] Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and
publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, Stand forth,
and prepare thee; for the sword hath devoured round
15 about thee. [a] Why are thy strong ones swept away?

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[a] Or, according to some ancient authorities, *Why is thy strong one swept away? he stood not &c.*

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11. The wound of Egypt is incurable: though she go into Gilead to procure its far-famed mastic (viii. 22); though she tries one remedy after another, all are in vain; no physician, though the reputation of her physicians was so high, has compounded a plaister (xxx. 13) which will heal her.

12. thy shame. The LXX reads 'thy voice,' which gives a better parallelism; the change is trifling.

the mighty man . . . the mighty: cf. Lev. xxvi. 37. In the shameful panic described in 5, 6 the warriors tumble over each other in their blind flight from the foe.

14. For the places named in this verse see ii. 16, xliv. 1. It would be better, however, to adopt the shorter text of the LXX, 'Declare ye in Migdol, and publish in Noph,' i. e. in the frontier town and the capital of Lower Egypt. The tenor of the declaration follows: Egypt is bidden stand forth to repel the enemy, whose sword has already devoured the surrounding peoples. For 'round about thee' the LXX seems to have read 'thy thicket,' which is accepted by Schwally and Cornill. This is supported by the simile in 22, 23, but it is very questionable if it yields a satisfactory sense. It would be necessary to render 'is devouring,' since if the thicket had already been cut down the day for defence would have gone by.

15. The Hebrew reads the singular, except in the word rendered 'thy strong ones,' for which the singular should no doubt be substituted, with several Versions and more than sixty Hebrew

they stood not, because the LORD did [a] drive them.
He made many to stumble, yea, they fell one upon 16
another: and they said, Arise, and let us go again to our
own people, and to the land of our nativity, from the
oppressing sword. They cried there, Pharaoh king of 17

[a] †Or, *thrust them down*

MSS. The text, however, needs a further alteration. The verb rendered ‘swept away’ is really two words written as one; the LXX gives us the correct text, ‘Why is Apis fled? Thy strong one stood not, because the LORD did thrust him down.’ Apis was the sacred bull, in which Osiris was believed to be incarnate. The god of Egypt cannot stand before the assault of the Babylonians (cf. Isa. xix. 1, xlvi. 1, 2, and x. 4, if we are to read with Lagarde, ‘Beltis bows down, Osiris is broken’). ‘Thy strong one’ is then a synonym for Apis; the Hebrew word is often used for bulls. In viii. 16, xlvii. 3, it is used of horses, so also l. 11.

16. The reference to a return home shows that the speakers are foreigners; apparently not the mercenaries but traders: cf. Isa. xiii. 14. But this does not suit the present text, for a reference to the foreigners should have preceded. Giesebrecht, with a slight emendation (*‘erb*^{e}*ka* for *hirbāh* and *kāshal* for *kōshēl*), reads ‘Thy mingled people have stumbled and fallen, and they said one to another, Arise,’ &c. This is supported by the LXX, accepted by Duhm, Erbt, and Driver, and is probably correct. For ‘the mingled people’ cf. l. 37, Ezek. xxx. 5, 1 Kings x. 15, and the note on xxv. 20. Cornill is dissatisfied with this, since the insertion of the foreigners seems to him unsuitable here. He supposes that Jeremiah is still referring to Apis; and, eliminating the greater part of the verse, reads ‘He hath sorely stumbled, yea fallen, before the oppressing sword.’

17. A difficult verse. We should read, with a different pointing, ‘Call ye the name of Pharaoh’ (so LXX). They are to call him *shā’ōn he‘ĕbir hammo‘ed.* This name apparently contains a play on the king's name; if so, the second word must refer to Hophra, whose name in Egyptian is Uaḥ-ab-ra: cf. for a similar contemptuous word-play on Egypt Isa. xxx. 7. The obscurity of the clause is probably due to the difficulty of getting a satisfactory word-play on the name. Cornill argues that the prophecy must be contemporaneous with Hophra, and if so, certainly authentic. This is on the whole probable, though Duhm considers the verse to be a marginal gloss, and Giesebrecht says that a later Rabbi could quite well have perpetrated a witticism of this kind. Even Rothstein, who regards the passage as Jeremianic, thinks that this sentence is quite prosaic and certainly does not belong to the

Egypt is but a noise; he hath let the appointed time pass
18 by. As I live, saith the King, whose name is the LORD
of hosts, surely like Tabor among the mountains, and like
19 Carmel by the sea, so shall he come. [a] O thou daughter
that dwellest in Egypt, [b] furnish thyself to go into captivity: for Noph shall become a desolation, and shall be
20 burnt up, without inhabitant. Egypt is a very fair heifer;

[a] Or, *O thou that dwellest with the daughter of Egypt*
[b] Heb. *make thee vessels of captivity.*

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original text, and passes the same judgement on 18. But a later writer would be likely to know that the king who was reigning when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt was Amasis. The meaning of the name is not clear; 'a Crash, who has let the appointed time pass by' is perhaps the best rendering. He has let the time go by when he might have secured himself against this calamity; or perhaps better, He has let the time in which the Divine mercy might have been granted pass by.

18. As Tabor towers high over the mountains, and as Carmel rises sheer above the sea, so the foe who comes on Egypt will overtop other conquerors. Tabor is not the loftiest mountain of Palestine, but it makes the impression of great height because it rises from the plain; and similarly Carmel by the sea, though its actual height is only about 600 feet. The metaphor was perhaps suggested to Jeremiah by the flatness of Egypt, which was such a contrast to Palestine. The conqueror is not named; Nebuchadnezzar is intended. If the passage is late, Schmidt's suggestion that he is Alexander the Great is plausible.

19. O thou daughter. The population of Egypt is addressed, and bidden get ready the 'vessels of captivity' (see margin), i. e. the necessaries for a journey such as food and utensils (in Ezek. xii. 3 the same phrase is translated 'prepare thee stuff for removing'). Such preparations are imposed on the inhabitants by the destruction of Memphis, the capital.

20. In a fresh metaphor the poet describes the disaster of Egypt. She is 'a graceful heifer' (for this rendering see Driver, p. 368), well-nourished and finely proportioned, but a gadfly has come upon her, stinging her into flight. This, since Hitzig, is the generally accepted view, though the rendering 'gadfly' is not universally accepted. Cornill corrects the text and reads 'a herdsman (*bōqēr*) from the north shall become her master (b^{e}*'ālāh*).' He thinks a personal designation more suitable to the connexion. He also transposes the last part of 21, 'for the day . . . visitation,'

but [a] destruction out of the north is come, [b] it is come.
Also her hired men in the midst of her are like calves of 21
the stall; for they also are turned back, they are fled
away together, they did not stand: for the day of their
calamity is come upon them, the time of their visitation.
[c] The sound thereof shall go like the serpent; for they shall 22
march with an army, and come against her with axes, as

[a] †Or, *the gadfly* [b] †Or, according to many ancient authorities, *upon her* [c] †Or, *Her sound is like that of the serpent as it goeth*

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to the close of this verse, to secure a better balance of the two similes, and because the reference to visitation suits Egypt herself better than her mercenaries.

21. The mercenaries who were hired to fight proved useless in the day of conflict. For they were pampered like calves fed up in the stalls, and were thus utterly unfit for the stern realities of warfare. The mercenaries here mentioned are not those of 9, but the Ionians and Carians, introduced into his service by Psammetichus, and retained by his successors. Hophra did not send them on the expedition against Cyrene; they failed to secure him victory over Amasis (Herodotus ii. 152 ff.).

22, 23. These verses are obscure. If we leave the text as we have it, but adopt the rendering in the margin, 23^a seems to mean either that Egypt's movement in retreat is inaudible, like the rustle of the serpent as it glides through the wood, not like the tramp of a mighty host, or else that Egypt's moan after her defeat is as inaudible. In either case the point is the weakness of Egypt. The former is perhaps the better. The LXX, however, instead of 'the serpent as it goeth,' reads 'a hissing serpent.' This is probably to be preferred. Egypt is like a serpent driven back from its lair by the advance of the woodmen; it can offer no more resistance than an impotent hiss of defiance. The metaphor is all the more appropriate since the serpent holds so conspicuous a place in the royal insignia of Egypt. Cornill thinks that 23^b should be attached to 22^a. It is not so suitable in its present position, but follows 22^a admirably and is equally in place before 22^b. In 22^b, 23^a the foe is described as approaching with axes, and cutting down Egypt as a dense, impenetrable forest, so thickly populated was it. It is disputed whether the Babylonians actually used battle-axes; if they did use them this might have suggested the metaphor to the prophet.

23 hewers of wood. They shall cut down her forest, saith
the LORD, [a] though it cannot be searched; because they
24 are more than the locusts, and are innumerable. The
daughter of Egypt shall be put to shame; she shall be
25 delivered into the hand of the people of the north. The
LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith: Behold, I will
punish Amon of No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with her
gods, and her kings; even Pharaoh, and them that trust
26 in him: and I will deliver them into the hand of those
that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar
king of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants: and
afterwards it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old,
27 saith the LORD. [S] [b] But fear not thou, O Jacob my
servant, neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save
thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity;
and Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at
28 ease, and none shall make him afraid. Fear not thou, O

[a] †Or, *for* [b] See ch. xxx. 10, 11.

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hewers: better 'gatherers,' though a slight alteration would give 'hewers,' which is much more appropriate.

They shall cut down. The verb is better pointed as an imperative 'Cut down,' as in vi. 6.

25. The LXX gives a much shorter and better text. It omits 'The LORD . . . saith,' also 'and Pharaoh . . . her kings.' For 'Amon of No' the LXX reads 'Amon in No.' Amon was the god of No, i. e. of the Egyptian Thebes: cf. Nah. iii. 8, Ezek. xxx. 14–16.

them that trust in him. Jeremiah has specially in mind the Jews whose inveterate trust in Egypt is once more doomed to disappointment.

26. This verse is absent in the LXX, and regarded by several as a later insertion. Cornill treats it as in the main genuine. He says that 26[a] must be earlier than Nebuchadnezzar's expedition, since matters turned out otherwise than as predicted, and the closing promise to Egypt is supported by Ezek. xxix. 13, 14, where after forty years' desolation Egypt is to be repeopled.

27, 28. These verses are also found in xxx. 10, 11, and are discussed there.

Jacob my servant, saith the LORD; for I am with thee: for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee with judgement, and will in no wise [a] leave thee unpunished.

[R] The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the 47 prophet concerning the Philistines, before that Pharaoh smote Gaza.

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[a] Or, *hold thee guiltless*

xlvii. ORACLE ON THE PHILISTINES.

The authenticity of this oracle has been denied by those who reject all the oracles on foreign nations, also by Gillies who thinks nothing is authentic in this section except parts of xlvi. Those who are prepared to recognize a Jeremianic nucleus in this section of the book usually take the present oracle to be by Jeremiah. And there is no substantial objection to this. Moreover, as Cornill points out, this oracle seems to be quite independent of other prophecies on the Philistines, the points of contact with them being too slight to justify any theory of dependence. Had it been a late composition it would probably have borrowed not a little from its predecessors. The date must be determined primarily from the prophecy itself; it belongs to the same period as most of the series, i. e. the fourth year of Jehoiakim (xlvi. 2), and the army which is to come on Philistia from the north is that of Nebuchadnezzar, the victor at Carchemish. The title, it is true, suggests a different occasion, a conquest of Gaza by a king of Egypt. According to Herodotus (II. 159), Pharaoh Necho after the battle at Magdolos, i. e. Megiddo, captured Kadytis, which since Hitzig's Dissertation on the subject (1829) has been generally identified with Gaza. And it is in fact probable that this is intended in 1, for that he 'smote Gaza' on his retreat from Carchemish is highly improbable; and we have no evidence to support the theory that Pharaoh Hophra conquered Gaza on his expedition against Phoenicia (Herod. II. 161). But if the title refers to the capture of Gaza in 608 B.C. we must ascribe the chronological notice to an editor, who took the mention of Gaza in 5 as referring to that event. This is supported by the fact that it is missing in the LXX, which reads simply, 'On the Philistines.' Duhm assigns it to the author of xlvi, and therefore at the earliest to the second half of the second century B. C. Schmidt dates it in the time of Alexander the Great, 'though the editor may have thought of the conquest of Gaza (defended by Demetrius) by Ptolemy in 312' (*Enc. Bib.* 2391). Erbt regards 6, 7 as certainly authentic, 2 may or may not be, 3-5 he takes to be editorial.

2 [J] Thus saith the LORD: Behold, waters rise up out of the north, and shall become an overflowing stream, and shall overflow the land and all that is therein, the city and them that dwell therein: and the men shall cry, and
3 all the inhabitants of the land shall howl. At the noise of the stamping of the hoofs of his strong ones, at the rushing of his chariots, at the rumbling of his wheels, the fathers look not back to their children for feebleness of hands;
4 because of the day that cometh to spoil all the Philistines,

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xlvii. 1. Title and date.

2–7. A flood rises out of the north and will overwhelm the land. The rush of horses and chariots causes the fathers for weakness to forget their children, since Philistia and Phoenicia are spoiled. The cities of Philistia mourn. How long, sword of Yahweh, ere thou be quiet? Return to thy scabbard, and be still. How can it be quiet, seeing Yahweh has appointed its mission?

xlvii. 1. See the Introduction to the chapter.

2. Cf. Isa. viii. 7, 8. The waters, i. e. the invading army, come from the north; the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar are intended. During the summer many of the water-courses of Palestine are dry, but in the rainy season they quickly fill with raging torrents, which overflow their banks.

and the men . . . howl: struck out as an insertion by Cornill and Rothstein. It is criticized on metrical and stylistic grounds, and as introducing an eschatological element, foreign to the passage.

3. Such is the terror inspired by the wild rush of the foe's steeds and war-chariots, that even the fathers are unnerved and leave their children behind them in their panic-stricken flight. Giesebrecht, on metrical grounds, regards 'At the noise . . . wheels' as an insertion. The description would be impoverished by the omission. Cornill cures the metrical irregularity by omitting 'at the rushing of his chariots.'

4. The text is again uncertain. If it is correct, the R.V. gives the probable sense: the Philistines, the sole remaining help of the Phoenicians, are cut off. That they really sustained a relation of such importance to Tyre and Sidon is improbable. The word rendered 'that remaineth' means properly 'a survivor,' one who escapes from disaster, and this does not suit 'to cut off;' besides to cut off from Tyre and Zidon every helper that remaineth: for the LORD will spoil the Philistines, the remnant of the [a] isle of Caphtor. Baldness is come upon Gaza; 5

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[a] Or, *sea coast*

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a survivor is not well qualified to act the part of a helper. Cornill reads 'and to cut off for Tyre and Sidon the whole remnant of their strength.' This had been given by Duhm as the original of the LXX, and is to be preferred to his own emendation. The incidental and unexpected mention of the Phoenicians seems to the present writer a suspicious feature. This would be somewhat mitigated, though by no means removed, if with Duhm we continued 'for Yahweh will spoil the whole remnant of the isles.' The LXX supports this. Cornill and Giesebrecht keep the Hebrew text, but regard the clause as a gloss, a judgement Rothstein extends to the whole verse. Caphtor is probably Crete, from which the Philistines originally came. Caphtor is named as their original home in Amos ix. 7, Deut. ii. 23 (in the latter passage they are described as Caphtorim); the identification of Caphtor with Crete is supported by the name Cherethites given to the Philistines (1 Sam. xxx. 14, Ezek. xxv. 16, Zeph. ii. 5).

5. For the mourning customs here mentioned see note on xvi. 6. Gaza is mentioned first of the Philistine towns, as in Zeph. ii. 4, where the order is geographical, proceeding from south to north: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron. It was a very important city, since it stood at the junction of the caravan road from Arabia and that from Egypt. It has still a considerable population. Cornill corrects Ashkelon into Ashdod. It is true that the omission of Ashdod is surprising, and that Ashkelon is mentioned in 7 (but see notes on 6, 7). The two names begin similarly, but the substitution of one for the other is precarious. It would be better, with Rothstein, to insert it before Ashkelon (but see below), and suppose that it has fallen out through the similarity of the two words. It is generally agreed that 'the remnant of their valley' is incorrect, since it is unsuitable; 'valley' is not a fitting designation of the Philistine plain, and we expect a proper name. This is given by the LXX 'the remnant of the Anakim' (a difference of one consonant). The Anakim were a race of giants (Num. xiii. 22, 28, 33: cf. Gen. vi. 4; Deut. i. 28, ii. 10, ix. 2; Joshua xi. 21, 22, xiv. 12–15, xv. 13, 14); they are connected with Hebron, but also according to Joshua xi. 22 with Philistia. This emendation is accepted by most modern scholars. Adopting the suggestion that Ashdod should be inserted in the text, it would be better, since no Anakim were left in Ashkelon, but only in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod (Joshua xi. 22), to insert it after Ashkelon rather than

Ashkelon is brought to nought, the remnant of their
6 valley: how long wilt thou cut thyself? O thou sword of
the LORD, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up
7 thyself into thy scabbard; rest, and be still. How canst
thou be quiet, seeing the LORD hath given [a] thee a
charge? against Ashkelon, and against the sea shore,
there hath he appointed it.

48 Of Moab. Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of

[a] Heb. *it*.

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before it. The verse would then read 'Baldness is come upon Gaza; Ashkelon is brought to nought; Ashdod, remnant of the Anakim, how long wilt thou cut thyself?' Cornill reads 'remnant of Ekron,' which had been previously suggested by Krochmal. In some ways this is preferable, but it is a more difficult emendation and has no attestation.

cut thyself. There may be a play in the Hebrew verb *tithgodādī* on the name of Gath. But this is not very probable. Gath is omitted in Zeph. ii. 4, and had perhaps been destroyed.

6, 7. These verses are separated from the preceding by some scholars, partly on metrical grounds. Giesebrecht treats them as an obvious addition, on account of 'the sword of Yahweh:' cf. xlvi. 10. But if this is objectionable we might simply read 'the sword.' There is no convincing reason for detaching the verses from their context. Verse 6 is apparently the cry of the Philistines; 7 the answer of the prophet. For 'How canst thou' we should read with the Versions 'How can it,' and of course with the margin, 'given it a charge.' 'The sea shore' is the Philistine coast· the Phoenician coast may perhaps be included.

xlviii. ORACLE ON MOAB.

This section arouses suspicion both by its length in contrast to the other oracles in xlvi–xlix, and its use of earlier prophecies, especially Isa. xv, xvi. Movers and Hitzig both assumed that the chapter contained a good deal of secondary matter, the former attributing twenty verses to the supplementer, Hitzig twenty-three. They agreed largely, though not completely, as to the verses which should be treated as secondary. Graf confessed that Jeremiah would not lose if such interpolation were admitted, but he considered that the reasons alleged for excision were insufficient. Kuenen assigned sixteen verses to the editor. All three agreed in regarding 29-38 (Hitzig 38^a), 43-46 as editorial. Giesebrecht, Israel: Woe unto Nebo! for it is laid waste; Kiriathaim

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after a detailed examination, left a few verses which might be genuine, but in view of the fact that they were in harmony with the rest of the chapter he considered it to be arbitrary to separate them from their context and treated the whole as spurious. Cornill and Rothstein agree that there is a genuine Jeremianic nucleus, though they reconstruct it very differently. Schmidt brings the chapter down to the reign of John Hyrcanus; and Duhm, on the ground that it draws upon very late passages, says that it can hardly be older than the close of the second century B.C. Even Köberle omits it. The question can be dealt with to profit only in the detailed discussion of the chapter. But one general remark may be made here. Admitting that Jeremiah uttered oracles on the foreign nations, it is fairly certain that Moab would be included. If then we find an oracle on Moab in this section, there is a presumption that it contains at least a genuine nucleus, which may have suffered expansion; it is not antecedently probable that it should be entirely spurious. At the same time, in view of the length and diffuseness of the oracle, the prosaic character of some of its parts, the extensive borrowing from earlier writers, the animosity which seems at a later period to have been felt for Moab (Isa. xxv. 10–12), there is a strong presumption that the original oracle, if such can be found, has been much expanded.

The chapter is remarkable for the large number of place-names contained in it, a feature that it has in common with the oracle on Moab in Isa. xv, xvi, from which it has borrowed so extensively. The sites of some are unknown, and of some more than one identification has been proposed, in yet other cases the text is suspicious.

xlviii. 1–10. Yahweh announces the overthrow of Moab and its cities; let the inhabitants save themselves by flight. Chemosh and his people shall go into exile, and the land become a desolation. Cursed be he that doeth this work of Yahweh negligently.

11–19. Moab has been left undisturbed from his youth, and his character has not been disciplined by unsettlement; now he will be driven out of his land, and his trust in Chemosh will be put to shame. His warriors are slain, and the wail is raised over him: The strong staff is broken; Dibon's glory is humbled; Aroer asks the fugitives for tidings.

20–28. Moab is spoiled, judgement has come on all his cities. Moab has vaunted himself against Yahweh, and shall be made a derision, as he had held Israel in derision. Let the inhabitants take refuge in the rocks.

29–39. We have heard of Moab's pride. I will wail for the ruin of its vineyards. The whole land utters its cry. The wor-

is put to shame, it is taken: [a] Misgab is put to shame
2 and [b] broken down. The praise of Moab is no more; in
Heshbon they have devised evil against her, Come, and
let us cut her off from being a nation. Thou also, O
Madmen, shalt be brought to silence; the sword shall

[a] †Or, *the high fort* [b] †Or, *dismayed*

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shippers are cut off. I am sore grieved for Moab; its inhabitants are all in mourning, for Moab is broken, a derision to all around him.

40–47. The conqueror swoops on Moab like a griffon, and destroys it for its arrogance against Yahweh; none shall escape death or exile. Yet Moab's fortune shall be reversed in the latter days.

xlviii. 1. Nebo is not Mount Nebo, but a hill-town, perhaps on or near the mountain. It is mentioned in Num. xxxii. 3, 38, Isa. xv. 2, and on the Moabite Stone. **Kiriathaim** is probably to be identified with Kureyat, which lies ten miles to the north of the River Arnon, and six to the north of Dibon, ten to the east of the Dead Sea, and four to the south-west of Jebel Atarus.

Misgab . . . dismayed. Misgab is mentioned nowhere else, and is perhaps to be rendered 'the high fort,' as in Isa. xxv. 12, in which case Kir-heres (31, 36) may be intended. Duhm thinks we should substitute Moab; Giesebrecht suggests Ar-Moab; Cheyne (*Enc. Bib.* 3153) omits 'it is taken . . . shame and' as due to dittography. Rothstein reaches the same result by a different route. The repetition of 'is put to shame' is probably due to an error, and the Hebrew at the close of the verse is strange.

2. Heshbon, now Hesban, was a famous city of Moab, about four miles to the north-east of Mount Nebo, twenty-five to the north of the Arnon, and sixteen east of the Jordan. It was the city of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who had taken all the territory of Moab down to the Arnon (Num. xxi. 26) and then lost it to the Hebrews; at a later time the Moabites regained possession of it, as we gather from Isa. xv. 2, xvi. 8, 9. The verb rendered 'devised' contains a play on Heshbon, similarly with Madmen and 'brought to silence.' Madmen, however, is otherwise unknown, and we should probably read, with LXX, Syr., and Vulg., 'Thou also shalt be utterly brought to silence.' Cheyne reads Nimrim (*Enc. Bib.* 2892, 3147). Since Heshbon was a city of Moab, some think the statement in the text that they plan evil against Moab in Heshbon is meaningless, and emend the text. Giesebrecht's is perhaps the best correction, 'Against Heshbon they have devised evil.' But the present text is satisfactory: the invaders, entering

pursue thee. The sound of a cry from Horonaim, spoil- 3
ing and great destruction! [S] Moab is destroyed; her little 4
ones have caused a cry to be heard. [a] For by the ascent 5
of Luhith with continual weeping shall they go up; for
in the going down of Horonaim they have heard the dis-
tress of the cry of destruction. [J] Flee, save your lives, and 6

[a] See Isa. xv. 5.

Moab from the north, occupy Heshbon and plan the continuance of their campaign.

3. The position of Horonaim is uncertain. Cheyne places it 'near the south border of Moab, on one of the roads leading down from the Moabite plateau to the Jordan valley' (*Enc. Bib.* 2113), and a similar view is taken by several scholars. Cornill adopts the identification, but thinks that a place more to the north is needed, which bears the brunt of the invasion from the north; he reads 'from Abarim' as in xxii. 20, 'cry from Abarim' (see note). On G. A. Smith's map of Palestine Horonaim is placed (with a query) about one and a half miles from the north-east end of the Dead Sea. If this identification were correct, Cornill's objection would be met.

4. her little ones . . . heard. We should read, with the LXX and a few Hebrew MSS., 'they make a cry to be heard unto Zoar:' cf. Isa. xv. 5. Zoar lay at the south-east extremity of the Dead Sea, the cry of the Moabites thus rings from north to south of the land. Possibly, however, for Moab we should read Ar of Moab (Isa. xv. 1), a city on the south bank of the Arnon, since in the list of Moabite towns the mention of Moab itself is surprising.

5. This verse is largely taken from Isa. xv. 5, which had already influenced 4. Both verses are probably non-Jeremianic. The ascent of Luhith is said to lie between Rabbath-Moab and Zoar; it was apparently in the neighbourhood of Horonaim (see 3). It is identified by some with Sarfa, north of the Wady Kerak. Its mention in a Nabataean inscription found in Moab is doubtful. Cheyne reads here 'the ascent of Eglaim.' Omit 'continual' and 'the distress of.'

6. This exhortation to the Moabites to save themselves by flight is probably corrupt in the latter part. On the word rendered 'heath' see note on xvii. 6; if a tree is intended here we should probably render 'dwarf juniper,' and explain the metaphor as indicating the starved and destitute condition of the fugitives. But the expression is undeniably strange, and since the translation 'destitute' is unsatisfactory, and 'Aroer,' which the word also

7 be like [a] the heath in the wilderness. For, because thou hast trusted in thy works and in thy treasures, thou also shalt be taken: and Chemosh shall go forth into cap-
8 tivity, his priests and his princes together. [S] And the spoiler shall come upon every city, and no city shall escape; the valley also shall perish, and [b] the plain shall be
9 destroyed; as the LORD hath spoken. Give wings unto Moab, [c] that she may fly and get her away: and her cities shall become a desolation, without any to dwell therein.

[a] See ch. xvii. 6. [b] See Joshua xiii. 9, 17, 21.
[c] Or, *for she must fly: and her cities &c.*

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means, is not in the wilderness, several scholars suspect the text. The LXX reads 'the wild ass' (*'ārōd*), as in Job xxxix. 5; the word is probably a loan-word from Aramaic, and the sense is not unsatisfactory, the wild ass being very shy and difficult to capture. Cornill accepts this, but thinks the verb is corrupt and several objections may be urged against it. Duhm thinks on account of xvii. 6 that the noun is correct, but slightly altering the verb gets the sense 'and preserve it (i.e. your life) like the dwarf juniper in the wilderness.' This is recommended by the fact that it retains the play on Aroer the Moabite city (19).

7. thy works . . . treasures. If the text is correct, 'works' may mean the deeds of Moab, or the things she has made, or, as the word sometimes means, her idols. But the LXX reads one noun only and renders 'strongholds,' which should be accepted (see 41), either in lieu of both nouns, or of the former only.

Chemosh: the national god of Moab, often mentioned as such in the O.T. and on the Moabite Stone. For his deportation into exile cf. Isa. xlvi. 1, 2. A victory over a people was a victory over its god. For the latter part of the verse cf. Amos i. 15, 'their king' being taken apparently to mean the god of Ammon, i. e. Milcom: cf. xlix. 3.

8–10. Cornill treats these verses as non-Jeremianic; Rothstein retains 9^b 'and her cities . . . therein' for the prophet. A sentiment like that in 10 (cf. Judges v. 23) cannot well be attributed to Jeremiah, the Hebrew of 8 is unusual, and the meaning of 9^a is very uncertain.

8. the valley is the valley of the Jordan as it opens out near the Dead Sea, while **the plain** is the table-land of Moab on which its cities for the most part lay.

9. The R.V. probably gives the general sense of the first clause, though the rendering 'wings' is justified only by later

Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD [a] negligently, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood. [J] Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will send unto him them that [b] pour off, and they shall [b] pour him off; and they shall empty his vessels, and break their [c] bottles in pieces. And Moab shall be ashamed of Chemosh, as the house 10 11 12 13

[a] Or, *deceitfully* [b] †Heb. *tilt* (a vessel). [c] †Or, *jars*

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usage. We should render, with Driver, 'Give wings unto Moab, for she would fain fly away:' cf. 28. It seems to be spoken in mockery.

10. This bloodthirsty verse is surely not Jeremiah's. It was Hildebrand's favourite quotation.

11. The metaphor is well worthy of Jeremiah. Moab had led a much more settled life than Israel; it had, of course, suffered from invasion and foreign dominion, but not from exile. It had been like wine suffered to remain on the lees, and not poured from vessel to vessel. And the effect of this had been that the quality of the lees was more and more communicated to the wine. If the wine was good it was thus improved (cf. Isa. xxv. 6), but if inferior it deteriorated (cf. Zeph. i. 12). Moab had suffered by its freedom from the discipline of removal, its character had not been enriched by new experience, it had become more and more obstinately settled in its native characteristics, its 'taste' and 'scent,' learning nothing, forgetting nothing.

12. This long-continued freedom from disturbance is at last to end. Yahweh 'will send unto him tilters, and they shall tilt him,' empty the wine from the vessels and break the jars in pieces. In other words, he is to be thrown into exile. Since Jeremiah expected the catastrophe in the immediate future, we should probably omit the opening words of the verse which relegate it to an indefinite future.

13. Then Moab's trust in Chemosh will experience a bitter disillusion, as Israel had vainly trusted in Beth-el (cf. Amos v. 5). At Beth-el there was the golden bull, the symbol of Yahweh; and this, or perhaps the pillar of Jacob, is here intended as the object of Israel's trust. That the writer should refer to Beth-el rather

14 of Israel was ashamed of Beth-el their confidence. How
say ye, We are mighty men, and valiant men for the war?
15 Moab is laid waste, and [a] they are gone up into her cities,
and his chosen young men are gone down to the slaughter,
16 saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts. The
calamity of Moab is near to come, and his affliction hast-
17 eth fast. All ye that are round about him, bemoan him,
and all ye that know his name; say, How is the strong
18 [b] staff broken, the beautiful rod! O thou daughter that
[c] dwellest in Dibon, come down from thy glory, and sit in

[a] Or, *her cities are gone up* in smoke

[b] Or, *sceptre*

[c] Or, *art seated*

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than Jerusalem, suggests that the overthrow of the latter had not yet occurred, a noteworthy proof that the chapter contains a pre-exilic element.

ashamed of: i. e. disappointed in, see on ii. 26 and cf. ii. 36, xii. 13, a very clear case of the meaning, xiv. 3.

14. Cf. viii. 8, Isa. xix. 11.

15. This is a difficult verse, the Hebrew is strange; the LXX omits a good deal, and differs in the text of what it retains. It would perhaps be simplest to read much as in 18, 'The spoiler of Moab is come up against him, and his,' &c., though several other emendations have been suggested. The verse may perhaps be editorial.

16. Cf. Isa. xiii. 22, Deut. xxxii. 35.

17. The neighbouring peoples are summoned to raise the lament over Moab's downfall. For the words of the lament, introduced with the characteristic 'How' (Isa. i. 21; Lam. i. 1, ii. 1, iv. 1), cf. Isa. xiv. 5, 6.

18. Cf. xiii. 18, Isa. xlvii. 1. Dibon (now Diban) was four miles north of the Arnon, three north of Aroer, and thirteen east of the Dead Sea. It was situated on two hills, and from that proud eminence is bidden to come down (cf. Matt. xi. 23). It was at Dibon that the Moabite Stone was discovered in 1868; Mesha, whose victories over Israel it recounts, dwelt there.

sit in thirst. This expression has no parallel: the English suggests a sense that the Hebrew can hardly bear. The explanation 'sit on the thirsty ground,' which could be gained by alteration of the pointing, is also improbable; and the text is apparently corrupt: the LXX read differently. The sense expected is 'in the dust' or 'on the ground;' the latter is nearer the Hebrew, but

thirst; for the spoiler of Moab is come up against thee,
he hath destroyed thy strong holds. O [a] inhabitant of 19
Aroer, stand by the way, and espy: ask him that fleeth,
and her that escapeth; say, What hath been done?
Moab is put to shame; for it is [b] broken down: howl and 20
cry; [S] tell ye it in Arnon, that Moab is laid waste.

[a] Heb. *inhabitress.* [b] †Or, *dismayed*

Cornill's 'in filth' is nearer still. Another suggestion is 'in the mire,' which is favoured by the LXX. Isa. xxv. 10, 11 may perhaps be compared.

19. Aroer. Three cities of this name are mentioned in the O.T. The city intended here is the Moabite Aroer (now 'Ara'ir), about half a mile north of the Arnon, three or four miles south-south-west of Dibon, though very much lower, and eleven east of the Dead Sea. Thus it lay between Dibon and the Arnon, so that its inhabitants could question the fugitives as they escaped to 'the fords of Arnon' (Isa. xvi. 2).

20–24. The answer to the question of 19 seems to be given in the first part of 20. With the second part of this verse the Qina rhythm is abandoned, and in 21–24 we have a prosaic catalogue of cities which can hardly belong to the original poem. Accordingly we must regard 20^{b}–24 as a late insertion. The Arnon is probably the river of that name; it would be better to render 'by the Arnon.' Holon and Beth-gamul are mentioned nowhere else. Dibon, Beth-diblathaim, Beth-meon, Kerioth, Bozrah, Jahzah are mentioned on the Moabite Stone. Beth-diblathaim is not named elsewhere in the O.T., its identification with Almon-diblathaim (Num. xxxiii. 46) is dubious. The name suggests that it was rich in figs. Beth-meon is the same as Baal-meon (Num. xxxii. 38, Ezek. xxv. 9), and Beth-baal-meon (Joshua xiii. 17 and the Moabite Stone). It is the modern Ma'in, sixteen and a half miles north of Arnon, nine east of the Dead Sea, nine south-west of Heshbon. Kerioth (Amos ii. 2) is identified by some with Ar Moab, by others with Kir of Moab, but these identifications are very uncertain. Bozrah is obviously not the Edomite city (xlix. 13, Isa. lxiii. 1), but should be identified with Bezer (Deut. iv. 43; Joshua xx. 8, xxi. 36). It is perhaps to be identified with Kusr el Besheir, which lies about two miles south-west of Dibon and two north of Aroer. Jahzah is the scene of the defeat of Sihon (Num. xxi. 23, 24). It is also called Jahaz. Eusebius locates it between Medeba and Dibon. Mephaath is elsewhere associated with Jahaz (Joshua xiii. 18, xxi. 37; 1 Chron. vi. 79): presumably they were near together. See above on the plain (8), Dibon (18), Nebo (1),

21 And judgement is come upon [a] the plain country; upon
22 Holon, and upon Jahzah, and upon Mephaath; and upon
23 Dibon, and upon Nebo, and upon Beth-diblathaim; and
upon Kiriathaim, and upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-
24 meon; and upon Kerioth, and upon Bozrah, and upon
25 all the cities of the land of Moab, far or near. [J] The
horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the
26 LORD. [S] Make ye him drunken; for he magnified
himself against the LORD: and Moab shall wallow in his
27 vomit, and he also shall be in derision. For was not
Israel a derision unto thee? was he found among thieves?
for as often as thou speakest of him, thou waggest the
28 head. [J] O ye inhabitants of Moab, leave the cities, and
dwell in the rock; and be like the dove that maketh her

[a] See ver. 8.

Kiriathaim (1). For the last clause of 24 cf. xxv. 26, also at the close of a catalogue.

25. This verse connects well with 20ª. The 'horn' (Ps. lxxv. 10) and 'arm' are metaphors for might.

26, 27. With these verses the metre is again abandoned. The figure of drunkenness comes from xxv. 15–29, and the sickening realism of 26ᵇ in the Hebrew text is suggested by xxv. 27, which seems to be an editorial insertion (see note on xxv. 27–29). We should probably regard these verses as a later interpolation. As in Isa. xxv. 10, 11, Moab is depicted in a situation at once disgusting and ridiculous. The LXX, however, reads 'And Moab has clapped his hands.' This gives an excellent sense: Moab has clapped his hands in derision of Israel, he shall himself become an object of derision. The Hebrew verb rendered 'wallow' (for which 'splash' would be better) does not bear this meaning elsewhere, and this supports the LXX. We should have to assume that the Hebrew text had been corrupted under the influence of xxv. 27, and it is not quite easy to believe this. For the second clause of 26 cf. 42.

found among thieves? Was Israel discovered in the company of thieves, caught stealing, that Moab mocked at him? Cf. ii. 14, 26. Wagging the head was a gesture of derision: cf. Ps. lxiv. 8, Mark xv. 29.

28. The metre is here resumed, and the verse connects well

nest in the sides of the hole's mouth. [S] [a]We have 29
heard of the pride of Moab, *that* he is very proud; his
loftiness, and his pride, and his arrogancy, and the
haughtiness of his heart. I know his wrath, saith the 30
LORD, that it is nought; his boastings have wrought
nothing. [b]Therefore will I howl for Moab; yea, I will 31
cry out for all Moab: for the men of Kir-heres shall they
mourn. With more than the weeping of Jazer will I weep 32

[a] See Isa. xvi. 6. [b] See Isa. xv. 5, xvi. 7, 11.

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with 25. It is a fine verse, admirably suited to the situation, since the country offers many refuges to fugitives in the rocks, and countless doves build their nests in them. The closing words of the verse, however, are very strange. Giesebrecht suggests 'in the holes of the rocks of the precipices;' Rothstein (in Kittel) 'in the clefts' simply. Cornill gives the passage up.

29–38. This section is almost entirely derived from Isa. xv, xvi, and is not an improvement on the original. Some Jeremianic elements are perhaps embedded in it, but the passage as a whole is late.

29, 30. A very diffuse expansion of Isa. xvi. 6. For the pride of Moab cf. Isa. xxv. 11, Zeph. ii. 8–10, and perhaps the Moabite Stone; but, as Cheyne only too truly says, 'all national monuments of this sort have a tendency to exaggeration' (*Pulpit Commentary*, ad loc.). Render 30, '*I* know, saith Yahweh, his wrath; and his boastings are untruth; they do untruth' (Driver).

31. Derived from Isa. xvi. 7, but with alterations. The earlier passage gives a logical connexion; Moab's pride will lead to Moab's wailing over his misfortune. Here by the substitution of the first person, obviously under the influence of Isa. xvi. 9, the prophet's grief over Moab's fate is strangely represented as due to Moab's pride. 'The men of Kir-heres' is probably a textual error for 'the raisin-cakes of Kir-heres' rather than a deliberate alteration. On the raisin-cakes see Whitehouse's notes on Isa. xvi. 7; they were made of pressed grapes and fine meal; and had a place in religious festivities (cf. Hos. iii. 1). Kir-heres (in Isa. xvi. 7 Kir-hareseth) is probably identical with Kir of Moab (Isa. xv. 1), the modern Kerak, eight miles east of the Dead Sea, and about seventeen miles south of the Arnon. It was a very strong fortress, near the south frontier of Moab.

32. From Isa. xvi. 8, 9, but with change of order, and textual variations. At the beginning of the verse we should probably read simply 'With the weeping' (so Isa. xvi. 9) or 'As with the weep-

for thee, [a] O vine of Sibmah: thy branches passed over the sea, they reached even to the sea of Jazer: upon thy summer fruits and upon thy vintage the spoiler is fallen.
33 [J] [b] And gladness and joy is taken away, from the fruitful field and from the land of Moab; [S] and I have caused wine to cease from the winepresses: none shall tread with
34 shouting; the shouting shall be no shouting. [c] From the

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[a] See Isa. xvi. 8, 9. [b] See Isa. xvi. 10. [c] See Isa. xv. 4, &c.

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ing' (so LXX). Jazer is commonly identified with Sar, ten miles north of Heshbon and seven west of Rabbath Ammon. Sibmah is two and a half miles west-north-west of Heshbon. Its vines must have been famed for their choice quality and fruitfulness. The poet expresses this under the metaphor of a gigantic vine which sent out its branches south-west over or to the Dead Sea and north to Jazer (read 'even to Jazer;' 'the sea of' is a mistaken insertion from the previous clause, there is no lake at Jazer). Isaiah gives an eastern direction also, 'they wandered into the wilderness.' For 'the spoiler' read 'the *battle* shout' as in Isa. xvi. 9 (see note on next verse).

33. From Isa. xvi. 10, but mutilated in the latter part. Cornill thinks that the words 'And gladness and joy is taken away from the land of Moab' belong to the original poem of Jeremiah; he quotes as parallels vii. 34, xvi. 9, xxv. 10. For 'none shall tread with shouting' we should read, with Isa. xvi. 10, 'no treader shall tread.' The Hebrew is very harsh, and 'shouting' is due to the following clause. The word rendered 'shouting' might be used for the vintage shout, or the battle shout. The writer means that there will be a shouting in the vineyards, but it will not be the vintage shout as the grapes are trodden in the winepress, but the shout of the soldiery as they trample the vineyards down.

34. From Isa. xv. 4-6, much abbreviated. The opening of the verse gives no sense. Giesebrecht with a slight alteration reads, 'How criest thou, Heshbon and Elealeh;' Duhm, 'Crying are Heshbon and Elealeh.' For Heshbon see 2, for Jahaz see 21, for Zoar and Horonaim see 3. Elealeh was two miles north-west of Heshbon. Eglath-shelishiyah seems to mean the third Eglath; the name would distinguish it from two other Eglaths in the neighbourhood (cf. the three Strettons which are close together, Little Stretton, Church Stretton, and All Stretton). Its site is unknown, presumably it was near Horonaim. Duhm supplies the want of a verb by correcting 'from Zoar even unto,' and reading 'Horonaim and Eglath-Shelishiyah call out.' The 'waters of Nimrim' are not identified with certainty. They were probably in the south of Moab cry of Heshbon even unto Elealeh, even unto Jahaz have they uttered their voice, from Zoar even unto Horonaim, [a] to Eglath-shelishiyah: for the waters of Nimrim also shall become [b] desolate. [J] Moreover I will cause to 35 cease in Moab, saith the LORD, him that offereth in the high place, and him that burneth incense to his gods. [**S**] Therefore mine heart soundeth for Moab like pipes, 36 and mine heart soundeth like pipes for the men of Kir-heres: therefore the abundance that he hath gotten is perished. For every head is bald, and every beard 37 clipped: upon all the hands are cuttings, and upon the loins sackcloth. On all the housetops of Moab and in 38 the streets thereof there is lamentation every where:

[a] Or, as *an heifer of three years old* [b] Heb. *desolations.*

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perhaps the Wady Numeirah which runs into the Dead Sea near its southern extremity. The desolation is due to the stopping of the sources, as we read in 2 Kings iii. 25 with reference to the campaign of Israel, Judah, and Edom against Moab, 'they stopped all the wells of water.'

35. This verse has points of contact with Isa. xv. 2, xvi. 12, but seems not to be based upon them, and Cornill considers it, apart from 'saith the LORD,' to be a part of Jeremiah's prophecy. The Hebrew does not bear the rendering 'him that offereth in;' probably this is the sense intended: a slight change yields this sense.

36. From Isa. xvi. 11, xv. 7[a]. The sympathetic tone is noteworthy, though for the first 'mine heart' the LXX reads 'the harp of Moab.' 'Pipes' is substituted for 'harp;' they were used at funerals (Matt. ix. 23). The verb is less suitable here. The latter part of the verse is difficult, since 'therefore' is inappropriate; the A.V. renders 'because,' but this is rather questionable.

37. For 'baldness' and 'gashes' as signs of mourning see xvi. 6, xlvii. 5. The passage is based on Isa. xv. 2, 3. We learn only from it that cuttings were made in the hands. For 'the lions' we should read 'all lions,' with LXX and Vulgate.

38. The former part of the verse is derived from Isa. xv. 3. The latter part, however, is independent of the oracle in Isaiah, and is regarded by Cornill as part of Jeremiah's prophecy, since it is with slight excision metrically correct, and the metaphor is genuinely Jeremianic (xxii. 28: see note). It is dubious whether this latter feature favours the authenticity.

[**JS**] for I have broken Moab like a vessel wherein is no
39 pleasure, saith the LORD. How is it broken down! [a] *how*
do they howl! how hath Moab turned the back with
shame! so shall Moab become a derision and a dismaying
40 to all that are round about him. [**S**] For thus saith the
LORD: Behold, he shall fly as an eagle, and shall spread
41 out his wings against Moab. [b] Kerioth is taken, and the
strong holds are surprised, and the heart of the mighty
men of Moab at that day shall be as the heart of a woman
42 in her pangs. And Moab shall be destroyed from being
a people, because he hath magnified himself against the
43 LORD. [c] Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee,
44 O inhabitant of Moab, saith the LORD. He that fleeth
from the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that getteth
up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: [**J**] for
I will bring upon her, even upon Moab, the year of their
45 visitation, saith the LORD. [**S**] [d] They that fled stand

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[a] Or, *howl ye!* [b] †Or, *The cities are taken* [c] See Isa. xxiv. 17, 18.
[d] Or, *Fleeing because of the force they stand under*

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39. Here again Cornill claims for Jeremiah the latter part of the verse.

40, 41. For these verses the LXX gives simply 'For thus saith the LORD: Kerioth is taken, and the strong holds are surprised.' The rest of the verses has been inserted from xlix. 22, with the necessary alteration of the proper names. Probably we should render 'the cities' instead of 'Kerioth,' on account of the parallelism; if the word is a proper noun cf. 24. The eagle symbolizes the conqueror.

42. Cf. 2, 26.

43, 44^a occur also in Isa. xxiv. 17, 18^a with slight differences, and a general reference to the earth rather than the specific reference to Moab. Our passage is probably the later. Cf. Lam. iii. 47, Amos v. 18–20. The Hebrew for 'Fear, and the pit, and the snare' is *paḥad wāpaḥath wāpāḥ*; the assonances cannot be reproduced in English. For 44^b cf. xi. 23^b, xxiii. 12. Cornill assigns it to the original poems.

45–47 are absent in the LXX, which proceeds from 44 to the vision of the wine-cup, i.e. to xxv. 15 in the Hebrew. Verses 45, 46 are taken, except the beginning of 45, from Num. xxi. 28, 29,

without strength under the shadow of Heshbon: [a] for a fire is gone forth out of Heshbon, and a flame from the midst of Sihon, and hath devoured the corner of Moab, and the crown of the head of the tumultuous ones. Woe 46
unto thee, O Moab! the people of Chemosh is undone: for thy sons are taken away captive, and thy daughters into captivity. Yet will I [b] bring again the captivity of 47
Moab in the latter days, saith the LORD. Thus far is the judgement of Moab.

[J] Of the children of Ammon. Thus saith the LORD: **49**

[a] Or, *but* See Num. xxi. 28, 29. [b] Or, *return to*

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xxiv. 17. The opening words of 45 are far from clear. That the fugitives should shelter under the walls of Heshbon is strange, since they would rather be fleeing south. That Heshbon belonged to Ammon is not probable, in spite of xlix. 3 (see note); so that the fugitives are not represented as taking refuge at a foreign city. Instead of 'the midst of Sihon' we should read, with trivial alteration, 'from the house of Sihon;' Num. xxi. 28 reads 'city of Sihon,' i.e. Heshbon. Sihon took it from the Moabites, the Hebrews took it from him, now the Moabites had recovered it. The text in the latter part of 45 is better than in Num. xxiv. 17.

47. Cornill regards the promise of ultimate restoration as Jeremianic. The closing words are an editorial note indicating the close of the oracle. Rothstein thinks the writer means that at the time of writing the judgement of Moab still continued · the restoration belonged to the future.

xlix. 1-6. ORACLE ON AMMON.

An oracle on Ammon is quite to be expected among Jeremiah's prophecies on the nations, since like Moab and Edom it was akin to Israel and lived on its borders. The authenticity of the present prophecy is, however, decidedly rejected not only by those who believe all the oracles on the nations to be late, but by Giesebrecht. He urges that the people which is to invade Ammon remains quite obscure; the idea that Israel will take Ammon's land while it is in exile contradicts the representation in xxv that Israel is in banishment at the same time; and that Gilead should again fall to Ammon seems a strange withdrawal of the previous threats and promises. But as to the first of these, Giesebrecht admits a genuine element in the following oracle on Edom, though the foe remains just as obscure. The second objection is very weighty,

Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth
[a] Malcam [b] possess Gad, and his people dwell in the cities
2 thereof? Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the
LORD, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard
against Rabbah of the children of Ammon; and it shall
become a desolate [c] heap, and her daughters shall be
burned with fire: [S] then shall Israel [b] possess them that
3 did [b] possess him, saith the LORD. [J] Howl, O Heshbon,

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[a] Or, *their king* [b] Or, *inherit* [c] See ch. xxx. 18.

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but may be satisfied by the surrender of that element in the oracle, and the same answer may be made to the third.

After the deportation of Gad with others of the northern tribes in 734 B.C., the Ammonites who dwelt on the east of Gad's territory probably availed themselves of the opportunity to annex the fertile land. Amos i. 13–15 should be compared.

xlix. 1–6. Has Israel no sons, that Milcom's people dwell in Gad's cities? Behold, Rabbah shall be made desolate and her daughter cities; then Israel will enter again on possession. Let the Ammonites lament, Milcom shall go into captivity. Why glory in thy valley, rebel daughter, expecting no foe? Panic shall seize thee, and every one be driven out. But afterward Ammon shall be restored.

xlix. 1. The oracle opens with a question quite in Jeremiah's manner (cf. ii. 14 and often), Is it because Israel has no children to possess it, that Ammon has appropriated the territory of Gad? No, even if Gad were extirpated, there were other tribes of Israel to claim the rights of next-of-kin. Malcam should probably here and in 3 be pointed Milcom (so LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate), who was god of the Ammonites, as Chemosh of the Moabites.

2. Rabbah was the chief city of Ammon; it lay about thirteen miles north-east of Heshbon. 'Her daughters' are, of course, the smaller cities.

then shall Israel . . . the LORD. This clause recalls Zeph. ii. 9; but, apart from the vindictiveness of it (cf. Isa. xiv. 2), it raises the difficulty touched on already, that since Israel was to go into exile at the same time as Ammon, it would not be in a position to resume possession of its former territory. The clause should probably be omitted, as by Cornill.

3. This verse is difficult. Even if the existence of an otherwise unknown Ammonite city Ai were granted, the mention of Heshbon would be strange, since this was a Moabite city, though close on the border of Ammon. Graf supposed that Ai should be for Ai is spoiled; cry, ye daughters of Rabbah, gird you with sackcloth: lament, and run to and fro among the fences; for [a] Malcam shall go into captivity, his priests and his princes together. [b] Wherefore gloriest thou in 4 the valleys, thy flowing valley, O backsliding daughter? that trusted in her treasures, *saying*, Who shall come unto me? Behold, I will bring a fear upon thee, saith the 5

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[a] Or, *their king* [b] Or, *Wherefore gloriest thou in the valleys? thy valley floweth away*

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emended into Ar (city), thinking that as the capital of Moab was called Ar-Moab, that of Ammon might be called Ar or Ar-Ammon. It would be simpler, with Cornill, to read 'the city' (*hā'īr*). For 'Heshbon' he proposes 'children of Ammon,' but this is not easy; Duhm accepts the former emendation, but for 'Heshbon' reads 'palace' (*'armōn*), also not quite easy. Rothstein does not challenge 'Heshbon,' but eliminates Ai by reading 'for thou art spoiled.' Cornill thinks a line is missing after 'Rabbah,' and suggests, in accordance with l. 12, 'for your mother is put to shame.' The close of the verse is taken from Amos i. 15.

fences. The word properly means 'walls;' it is used with reference to sheep-folds, and the explanation is given that they should run to and fro in the open country, among the sheep-folds, because the cities could no longer afford them a shelter. But the text can hardly be right, the idea is most unnaturally expressed. What we need in this description is some expression of mourning. Giesebrecht proposed an emendation for the whole clause which may be rendered 'and having cut yourselves, wallow (in dust).' Duhm suggested a similar correction, but it would be simpler to read, with Cornill, 'run to and fro in mourning attire.'

4. This verse also is difficult. The Hebrew rendered 'thy flowing valley' is strange; we have probably to do with a case of dittography, and should read simply 'Wherefore gloriest thou in thy valley?' i. e. the valley in which Rabbah was situated, a very well-watered and fertile valley. The epithet 'backsliding' is also surprising as applied to a heathen people; Duhm's emendation, 'careless,' 'arrogant' (cf. Isa. xlvii. 7–10), gives an excellent sense. She trusts in her abundant supplies and inaccessibility to attack.

5. On this people, thus incredulous of calamity, shall fall a panic, inspired by an onslaught of her neighbours, and each shall seek his own safety in a flight which recks nothing of the safety of others, and which will not be retrieved. 'Every man right forth' is literally 'every man before him.'

Lord, the LORD of hosts, from all that are round about thee; and ye shall be driven out every man right forth, and there shall be none to gather up him that wandereth.

6 [S] But afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the LORD.

7 [J] Of Edom. Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Is

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6. This verse is wanting in the LXX, and is probably a later addition.

xlix. 7–22. ORACLE ON EDOM.

Of this oracle, equally with those on Moab and Ammon, we might say that it has in its favour the fact that Edom was so closely akin to Israel in blood and stood in such intimate relations to it in history that the absence of any oracle upon it would be surprising. The length of this section suggests that, as in the case of Moab, a Jeremianic original may have been expanded; and this is made still more probable by the close parallel with the Book of Obadiah. xlix. 9, 10^a corresponds to Obad. 5, 6; xlix. 14–16 to Obad. 1–4; and there are slighter points of contact. The critical problem thus presented is very complicated, largely on account of the uncertainties in which the criticism of Obadiah is involved. Since in its present form this book is clearly later than the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., when the Edomites displayed a bitter hostility towards Jacob (Obad. 10 ff.), it cannot have been used by Jeremiah in a prophecy dating from the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Inasmuch, however, as a comparison between the two texts shows that Obadiah on the whole preserves a more original form than Jeremiah, it has been very widely held that both prophets quote from an earlier oracle, which Obadiah has reproduced more faithfully: and this opinion is still held by several eminent critics, including Driver, G. A. Smith, and J. A. Selbie ('Obadiah' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*). The problem has, however, passed into a new stage, due to the development of criticism with reference to both books. So far as Obadiah is concerned, several of the foremost Old Testament scholars, including Giesebrecht, Cornill, Duhm, Nowack, and Marti, have accepted the view put forward by Wellhausen that the two prophets did not quote from an earlier prophecy, but that the original work of Obadiah consisted of Obad. 1–5, 7, 10–14, 15^b, and was wholly written some time after the destruction of Jerusalem, not to announce the approaching downfall of Edom, but to describe the ruin which had already overtaken it. This was the expulsion of the Edomites from their country by the Arabs. The prophecy was brought into wisdom no more in Teman? is counsel perished from the

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connexion with the conditions which lie behind the Book of Malachi. As criticism stands with reference to the Book of Jeremiah, no veto is imposed on Wellhausen's theory by the quotation from Obadiah in the present passage. Assuming that the version in Jeremiah is secondary, there is no difficulty in regarding it as a late insertion in a Jeremianic oracle; or if on other grounds the authenticity of our oracle be denied, in assuming that its post-exilic author made use of the quotation. If the extracts in Jeremiah are indissolubly connected with their context, this would carry with it an acceptance of the latter alternative. The question as to the criticism of Obadiah need not be further pursued here; the student may refer to the discussion devoted to it in the commentary on that Book by R. F. Horton and the literature mentioned above; an admirable statement and defence of Wellhausen's view is given by G. B. Gray in the article on 'Obadiah' in Hastings' *One Volume Dictionary of the Bible.* So far as our passage is concerned, we should probably adopt the view that a genuine Jeremianic nucleus is to be recognized, but that there has been considerable expansion. Even Giesebrecht assigns 7-11, with the exception of 9, to Jeremiah. Cornill agrees as to these verses, but thinks that 22 should be added to them, at least a quatrain having been omitted in the revision. The object of the revision was, he considers, the same here as in the case of Moab, to make the catastrophe as crushing as possible, both nations being special objects of Judah's hatred in the later period.

xlix. 7-12. Has Teman lost its wisdom? Let the Dedanites flee, for calamity comes upon Edom at Yahweh's hand; he will not be able to conceal himself; he is destroyed, and must leave his orphans and widows in the care of Yahweh.

13-22. For Bozrah and all the cities shall be laid waste; the nations are summoned to war against her, and she shall be made small; her proud security is her ruin; all that pass by it will be astonished at her fate. The land shall be as forsaken as the cities of the Plain. A lion will come and drive them from their homestead. They shall be dragged away helpless. The earth will tremble at the crash of their fall. One shall swoop upon Bozrah like a griffon, and the heart of Edom's warriors shall be in anguish.

xlix. 7. This verse has some likeness to Obad. 8, but is not taken from it. If Wellhausen's reconstruction of the original prophecy of Obadiah is correct, Obad. 8 is a later insertion; in that case it was probably introduced from this passage. Teman was strictly a district of Edom, probably in the north-east of that country, since Dedan (see xxv. 23), which lay on the south of Edom, is repre-

8 prudent? is their wisdom vanished? Flee ye, turn back,
dwell deep, O inhabitants of Dedan; for I will bring the
calamity of Esau upon him, the time that I shall visit him.
9 [S] If grapegatherers came to thee, [a] would they not leave
some gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, would they not
10 destroy till they had enough? [J] But I have made Esau
bare, I have uncovered his secret places, and he shall not
be able to hide himself: his seed is spoiled, and his

[a] †Or, *they will leave no gleaning grapes; if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. For &c.* See Obad. 5.

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sented in Ezek. xxv. 13 as at the other extremity. Its chief town seems from Amos i. 12 to have been Bozrah, unless Teman is there used for Edom as a whole. Eliphaz, the friend of Job, was a Temanite; but it is questionable if this verse substantiates the current opinion that Edom was famed for its wisdom. Cornill thinks that the second part of the line which is missing after 'Teman,' if we have Qina rhythm here, may perhaps have run 'discernment in Bozrah.'

8. The Dedanites (xxv. 23) on the southern border of Edom are bidden to flee and 'dwell deep' in some impenetrable retreat, lest they be overwhelmed by the blast of judgement which is to sweep over Edom. The last clause of the verse should be 'the time of his visitation' (so LXX, Vulgate).

9. This verse is derived from Obad. 5, where the meaning is that whereas thieves would steal only till they had enough, and grapegatherers would leave grapes for the gleaners who followed them, the enemy has left nothing but made a clean sweep. The application is different here. The rendering in the margin gives the true sense; and the enemy are not contrasted with the grapegatherers and thieves, but represented under these figures. The main point is the same, that the ruthless foe spares nothing.

10. This has a parallel in Obad. 6, which probably does not belong to the original prophecy, but has been inserted in Obadiah from our passage, like Obad. 8 (see note on 7). The superiority in sense lies with our passage, since it fits the context; the Dedanites are bidden flee to their retreats (8), but Yahweh has made this impossible for Edom, his retreats are all discovered. The first person pronoun is emphatic.

his seed . . . is not. Cornill reads simply 'he is spoiled and is not;' partly on metrical grounds, partly because the reference to the 'seed' conflicts with 11. Rothstein agrees for the former reason; Giesebrecht omits simply 'and his brethren and his neigh-

brethren, and his neighbours, and he is not. Leave thy 11
fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let
thy widows trust in me. [S] For thus saith the LORD: 12
Behold, they [a] to whom it pertained not to drink of the
cup shall assuredly drink; and art thou he that shall
altogether go unpunished? thou shalt not go unpunished,
but thou shalt surely drink. For I have sworn by myself, 13
saith the LORD, that Bozrah shall become an astonishment,
a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof
shall be perpetual wastes. [b] I have heard tidings from 14

[a] Or, *whose judgement was not*

[b] See Obad. 1–4.

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bours.' The LXX reads the word rendered 'seed' as 'arm' (or 'hand'); on this basis Duhm reads 'he is spoiled by the arm of his brothers and neighbours.'

11. In this context a very striking verse, which forms a noble contrast to the unmeasured hate of Edom which characterizes many passages. It is easier to believe that it is Jeremiah's utterance than that of another. As Cornill truly says, it is remarkable that it was not expunged. The Divine judgement destroys the warriors of Edom, but it does not root out women and children; they are indeed made widows and orphans, but Yahweh will pity their forlorn condition and tenderly comfort and preserve them.

12. Cf. xxv. 15–28 for the cup of Yahweh's wrath. This verse rests upon xxv. 28, 29, it cannot well be Jeremiah's, for he held that the people of Yahweh were pre-eminently worthy to drink the cup. 'He would have been the last to say that Judah or Israel had been punished without deserving it' (Schwally). No doubt the fact that its punishment is spoken of as still future might be plausibly urged in favour of a date before 586 B.C. But such an anticipation as is expressed in this verse might well have been uttered from the standpoint of the later eschatology.

13. Giesebrecht prints the verse as secondary, but says that it may perhaps have formed the conclusion of the oracle. Cornill treats it as secondary, since it is written in prose.

Bozrah is commonly identified with Buṣaireh, about twenty miles south-east of the Dead Sea, thirty-five north of Petra; though R. A. S. Macalister says, 'The guesses that have been made at its identification are of no importance' (Hastings' *One Volume Bible Dictionary*).

14–16. These verses are parallel to Obad. 1–4, and derived from it. The words with which they open stand much better at the

the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the nations, *saying*, Gather yourselves together, and come against her,
15 and rise up to the battle. For, behold, I have made thee small among the nations, and despised among men.
16 As for thy terribleness, the pride of thine heart hath

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beginning of a prophecy as in Obadiah, than in the middle as here. The prophet (for 'I' Obadiah reads 'We,' i.e. prophet and people) has received a Divine communication; a messenger is sent to stir the nations against Edom (cf. Isa. xiii. 2-4).

15. The consequent humiliation of Edom.

16. The opening of the verse is very difficult, perhaps incurably corrupt. The word rendered, 'As for thy terribleness' is absent from Obadiah, and occurs nowhere else. If this rendering is correct, the meaning may be that although the formidable character of Edom, due to her almost impregnable position, had indeed led her to deem herself beyond peril, Yahweh by bringing her down would convince her that her pride had played her false. More probably it is an exclamation meaning either 'Oh thy shuddering!' i.e. when the unexpected calamity overtakes thee, or 'Oh the shuddering for thee!' i.e. for the shuddering thy fate inspires in the spectators. Duhm has made a remarkably ingenious suggestion. He points the last word of 15 so as to yield the sense 'through Edom thy Horror;' Edom being interpreted as the name of a god. We have no proof that Edom was the name of a god, though several scholars believe that it was, and Obed-edom might be quoted in corroboration (see S. A. Cook's note in *Enc. Bib.* 3462). Duhm takes the word to be a gloss, since it is absent in Obadiah. In his translation, however, he renders 'and despised of men thy image of horror.'

The description of Edom's almost inaccessible position is very true to the facts. 'Its capital, Petra, lay in an amphitheatre of mountains, accessible only through the narrow gorge, called the *Sik*, winding in with precipitous sides from the west; and the mountain sides round Petra, and the ravines about it, contain innumerable rock-hewn cavities, some being tombs, but others dwellings, in which the ancient inhabitants lived' (Driver). 'The interior is reached by defiles, so narrow that two horsemen may scarcely ride abreast, and the sun is shut out by the overhanging rocks. . . . Little else than wild-fowls' nests are the villages; human eyries perched on high shelves or hidden away in caves at the ends of the deep gorges' (G. A. Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, ii. p. 179). As the last writer further points out, it was 'a well-stocked, well-watered country, full of food and lusty men, deceived thee, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of [a] the rock, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the LORD. And Edom 17 shall become an astonishment: every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah 18 and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the LORD, no man shall dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein. Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the 19 [b] pride of Jordan [c] against the strong habitation: [d] but I will suddenly make him run away from her; and whoso is chosen, him will I appoint over her: for who is like me? and who will appoint me a time? and who is the

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[a] Or, *Sela* See 2 Kings xiv. 7. [b] Or, *swelling* [c] †Or, *unto the permanent pastures* [d] †Or, *for I will suddenly drive them away*

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yet lifted so high, and locked so fast by precipice and slippery mountains, that it calls for little trouble of defence.'

the rock. This is probably the correct rendering, but there is an allusion to Sela, i.e. perhaps Petra, which lay fifty miles south of the Dead Sea, in the situation described in the preceding note. It was the capital of the Nabataeans.

17. Almost identical with xix. 8; cf. xviii. 16.

18. The **neighbour cities** are Admah and Zeboim, Deut. xxix. 23: cf. Hos. xi. 8. The verse is repeated in l. 40. Notice 'son of man,' used as the equivalent of 'man.'

19–21. Repeated in l. 44-46, with adaptations to Babylon.

19. The foe comes up against Edom as a lion comes from the jungle to the pastures in search of prey. The word rendered 'strong' is rather 'permanent.' We may render 'permanent homestead,' explaining 'an abode of long standing and likely to endure.' The adjective is not very suitable; Duhm suggests 'pasture of rams;' Cornill improves this excellent suggestion, reading 'pasture of sheep.' He continues 'so will I suddenly drive them away, and their choice rams will I visit.' No shepherd will be able to withstand the foe, for Yahweh urges it on.

appoint me a time? i.e. for a contest: cf. Job ix. 19. No power is strong enough to challenge Yahweh.

20 shepherd that will stand before me? Therefore hear ye
the counsel of the LORD, that he hath taken against Edom;
and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the
inhabitants of Teman: Surely [a] they shall drag them away,
even the little ones of the flock; surely he shall make
21 their [b] habitation [c] desolate with them. The earth trem-
bleth at the noise of their fall; there is a cry, the noise
22 whereof is heard in the Red Sea. [J] Behold, he shall
come up and fly as the eagle, and spread out his wings
against Bozrah: and the heart of the mighty men of
Edom at that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her
pangs.

23 Of Damascus. Hamath is ashamed, and Arpad; for

[a] Or, *the little ones of the flock shall drag them away*
[b] Or, *pastures* [c] Or, *astonished at them*

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20. When the lion pounces on the flock, a lion so fierce and powerful that no shepherd can withstand him, the helpless sheep are dragged off to be devoured. Duhm and Cornill render 'the shepherd lads' instead of 'the little ones of the flock.'

22. Cornill thinks that this verse, with its simile of the eagle so appropriate to the foe which strikes at Edom in its mountain fastnesses, formed the conclusion of the original prophecy, and that one quatrain at least must have been struck out between 11 and 22. This verse has been employed in xlviii. 40, 41.

xlix. 23–27. ORACLE ON DAMASCUS.

The authenticity of this oracle is rejected by Cornill and Köberle, not to mention other scholars. Certainly there are difficulties in accepting it. Too much importance must not be attached to the fact that the title does not quite harmonize with the contents; which are concerned also with Hamath and Arpad (cf. Isa. xvii. 1–11). The charge that the situation is very indefinitely described applies to other oracles, the genuineness of which we have accepted; and granting that it dates from 605 B.C., there was no need to describe conditions familiar to all. More serious is the absence of any reference to these cities in the vision of judgement (xxv. 18 ff.) If Jeremiah at this time composed an oracle on them, it is not easy to understand why they are not included in the list of those who drank the cup. If this objection is not fatal, there they have heard evil tidings, they are melted away: there is [a] sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet. Damascus is 24 waxed feeble, she turneth herself to flee, and trembling hath seized on her: anguish and sorrows have taken hold of her, as of a woman in travail. How is the city of 25

[a] Or, *care*

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is no decisive reason against recognizing a genuine nucleus (so Rothstein). The last verse is imitated from the refrain in Amos i. 3—ii. 5, and corresponds closely to Amos i. 4 (see on xvii. 27). We find 26 also in l. 30; it may be original here, but 'Therefore' is more appropriate there. These two verses are accordingly not unlikely to be an addition. No serious difficulty lies against 24, 25, except that the language of 24 is rather conventional and contains an Aramaism. Verse 23 is not quite so easy to accept in its present form, but it is generally recognized that the text is corrupt. On the whole the present writer inclines to regard 23-25 as by Jeremiah.

xlix. 23-27. Hamath and Arpad are dismayed; Damascus in terror turns to escape. The city is forsaken. Therefore her warriors shall be overthrown; and a fire from Yahweh shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

xlix. 23. Hamath, now called Hama, still an important town, was a famous city of Syria, situated on the Orontes, 110 miles north of Damascus. **Arpad,** now Tell-Erfad, which is often mentioned with it (Isa. x. 9, xxxvi. 19, xxxvii. 13), lay 95 miles further north, and 10 miles north of Aleppo. The prophet describes the terror and paralysis due to the tidings they have heard, i. e. of Nebuchadnezzar's advance.

there is . . . quiet. This clause is unintelligible in its present form; there is no sea at Damascus. Several scholars read 'like the sea;' Cornill objects that the raging sea is very unsuitable to describe a people in terror, and with a slight emendation reads 'they are melted away there from care.' The present text may have arisen through the influence of Isa. lvii. 20.

24. Damascus was a very ancient city; for long the chief city in Syria.

trembling: the word is Aramaic.

25. The text can hardly be correct; we expect 'How is the city of praise forsaken.' The omission of the negative gives the right sense, but it is not easy to understand its insertion. Cornill reads 'Woe is me, for the city of praise is forsaken.' The closing words show that a Damascene is speaking, unless with several Versions we read 'the city of joy.' In that case Duhm's 'Woe to her' would need to be substituted for Cornill's 'Woe is me.'

26 praise not forsaken, the city of my joy? [S] Therefore her young men shall fall in her streets, and all the men of war shall be brought to silence in that day, saith the
27 LORD of hosts. And I will kindle a fire in the wall of Damascus, and it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.

28 [J] Of Kedar, and of the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote.

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26. Therefore is here quite unsuitable; if l. 30 is borrowed from our passage, the latter may have been influenced in turn by it, or the original text may have been 'Surely.'

27. Cf. Amos i. 4. Several kings of Damascus bore the name Ben-hadad.

xlix. 28-33. ORACLE ON ARAB TRIBES.

Like the preceding oracle, this also is rejected by Giesebrecht, Cornill, and Köberle. On the other hand Winckler, though with rather drastic textual criticism, Erbt, and Rothstein have accepted its authenticity, at least in part. Such an oracle we are led to expect by the reference to Arab tribes in xxv. 23. It is not quite clear why such an oracle should have been composed in the post-exilic period. It is true that the Arabs are represented as then hostile to Judah, and the spread of the Nabataeans might have occasioned a prophecy against them. But the fact that Nebuchadnezzar is expressly mentioned as the enemy leaves us with the pre-exilic date, or a deliberate ante-dating of the oracle, as our only alternatives. It is probable that here, as elsewhere, a prophecy by Jeremiah has been expanded by a later writer. The influence of Ezekiel is fairly clear in 30, 31.

xlix. 28-33. Yahweh gives the order to spoil Kedar of tents and flocks, of hangings and camels. Let the inhabitants of Hazor find a remote retreat, for Nebuchadnezzar has designs against them. Let them take refuge with a people secure from invasion. Their camels and cattle shall be the victor's spoil; they themselves shall be scattered to all the winds; and their land shall be a perpetual desolation.

xlix. 28. Kedar (see ii. 10) was the name of a prosperous Arab tribe living in village communities in the wilderness, often mentioned in the Old Testament and the cuneiform inscriptions. Hazor is elsewhere used for towns in Palestine; here it may be an Arabian town, otherwise unknown to us; or it may be the name of a district where the Arabs had settled down and dwelt in villages,

Thus saith the LORD: Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and
spoil the children of the east. Their tents and their flocks 29
shall they take; they shall carry away for themselves their
curtains, and all their vessels, and their camels: and they
shall cry unto them, Terror on every side. Flee ye, 30
wander far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor,
saith the LORD; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon
hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived
a purpose against you. [S] Arise, get you up unto a nation 31
that is at ease, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD;
which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone.
And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of 32
their cattle a spoil: and I will scatter unto all winds them
that have the corners *of their hair* polled; and I will
bring their calamity from every side of them, saith the

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the name being derived from the Hebrew term for village (cf. Isa. xlii. 11). 'Kingdom' is strange; the LXX gives 'queen,' which Winckler, Schmidt, and Erbt accept. We read elsewhere of queens in this region. 'The children of the east' are the Arabian tribes on the east of Palestine.

29. It is the nomads rather than the settled tribes that are here in mind. The curtains are the tent hangings, as in iv. 20.

Terror on every side: a Jeremianic expression, which, of course, might be due to a conscious attempt to simulate the prophet's style.

30. The writer is either Jeremiah or means to be taken for him, since the circumstances presupposed are those of Jeremiah's time. The exhortation 'dwell deep' is less suitable to Bedawin than to the Edomites to whom it is addressed in 8. It has not improbably been mistakenly introduced here from that verse.

31, 32. These verses have features in common with Ezekiel which point to their composition or at least interpolation under his influence. The description of the attack by Gog and his hordes on the defenceless Israelites, 'that are at quiet, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates' (Ezek. xxxviii. 11), is before the writer's mind, and there are other points of contact between the passages. Cf. also Judg. xviii. 7, 10, 27, 28. The exhortation is addressed to the enemy.

32. them . . . polled: cf. ix. 26, xxv. 23.

33 LORD. And Hazor shall be a dwelling place of jackals, a desolation for ever: no man shall dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein.

34 [J] The word of the LORD that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning Elam in the beginning of the reign of

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33. Cf. ix. 11, x. 22 for the former part of the verse; xlix. 18 for the latter.

xlix. 34–39. ORACLE ON ELAM.

Elam was a country lying to the east of South Babylonia and the Lower Tigris, later known as Susiana, and roughly identical with the country now called Chuzistan. That Jeremiah should devote an oracle to a country so distant and remote from Jewish interests has seemed to many scholars improbable; and even Rothstein rejects its authenticity. Köberle, however, who judges the prophecies on the nations less favourably than Rothstein, accepts it; and Cornill accepts a genuine nucleus, which was, he believes, expanded when the Elamites were identified with the Persians. Giesebrecht and Schmidt think the whole was written under the Persian rule; the latter supposes that it was written at the approach of Alexander, the hatred of Persia which it breathes being occasioned by the sufferings of the Jews at the hands of Ochus. But if the oracle is entirely spurious, it is very strange that a special date should be assigned to it, since we should have expected it to be dated with the others in the fourth year of Jehoiakim. And the altered conditions at this date are favourable to the authenticity. Elam was distant from Judaea, but it was near to Babylon. And with Jehoiachin a large number of Jews had gone to Babylon, and they kept up a close and constant correspondence with Judaea. For them the fate of Elam would have an interest it could not have possessed before the deportation. At a later time Ezekiel refers to the overthrow of Elam, here it is anticipated. It has been argued that the overthrow was actually effected by the Persian king Teispes, the great-grandfather of Cyrus. Cornill thinks that Jeremiah's interest may have been due to a presentiment that the power which had laid Elam low might be the destined conqueror of Babylon, as indeed proved to be the case.

xlix. 34–39. Jeremiah's prophecy on Elam at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign. Elam's bow shall be broken, and the Elamites shall be scattered to the four winds among all nations. Elam shall be dismayed before its enemies, and the sword shall consume them. Yet it shall be restored in the latter days.

Zedekiah king of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD 35
of hosts: Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, the chief
of their might. [S] And upon Elam will I bring the four 36
winds from the four quarters of heaven, and will scatter
them toward all those winds; and there shall be no nation
whither [a] the outcasts of Elam shall not come. [J] And 37
I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies,
and before them that seek their life: and I will bring evil
upon them, even my fierce anger, saith the LORD; and
I will send the sword after them, till I have consumed
them: and I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy 38
from thence king and princes, saith the LORD. But it 39
shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring
again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.

[S] The word that the LORD spake concerning Babylon, **50**

[a] Another reading is, *the everlasting outcasts.*

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xlix. 35. The Elamites were famous archers: cf. Isa. xxii. 6. A similar expression, however, is used with reference to Israel in Hos. i. 5.

36. Cornill regards this as a later insertion. The expression to 'scatter them toward all those winds' is characteristic of Ezekiel (Ezek. v. 10, 12, xii. 14), and the opening of the verse recalls Ezek. xxxvii. 9, and if there is dependence, Ezekiel is obviously the original. The latter point can hardly be pressed. It is, however, strange to read 37 after 36. After the prophecy that Elam will be scattered by the four winds to every nation under heaven, we do not expect to read that it will be dismayed before its enemies. Verse 37 fits well to 35, and the progress of thought is interrupted by 36.

38. Yahweh sets His throne in Elam in order to judge it.

l. 1—li. 58. ORACLE ON BABYLON.

That in a series of oracles on the nations Jeremiah should include a prophecy of Babylon's overthrow ought to occasion no surprise. Although he saw in Babylon the agent of Yahweh's judgement on Judah and other nations, he predicted that its empire would fall in seventy years. Moreover, that such an oracle was composed by him is attested by the narrative in li. 59–64, if concerning the land of the Chaldeans, by Jeremiah the prophet.

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its historicity can be accepted. Nevertheless it is an almost universally accepted result of criticism that l. 1—li. 58 cannot be the work of Jeremiah. This view was put forward by Eichhorn, and in spite of opposition from several scholars, notably Graf, it has been more and more adopted, Orelli constituting the chief exception at the present day. To this result Kuenen and especially Budde have been the foremost contributors. According to li. 59–64, the oracle belongs to the fourth year of Zedekiah. It does not belong to the oracles on the foreign nations published in the reign of Jehoiakim, so that its authenticity is not supported by these. It is distinguished from these also by its immense length. It contains 103 verses: that on Moab, which approaches it most nearly, contains forty-seven verses. It is noteworthy for its frequent repetitions. Budde reckons that the approach of desolation is mentioned eleven times; the capture and destruction of Babylon nine times; Israel's flight and return to Palestine seven times; and other themes are similarly the subject of repeated reference. Such a feature is quite unexampled in Jeremiah's prophecies. Looking at it still from the literary standpoint the relationship with other writings is very close. The fact that characteristic expressions of the Book of Jeremiah are present in large proportions might be urged in favour of its authenticity; but what was possible to Graf with his acceptance of almost the whole of the book as Jeremiah's, is no longer possible to those who recognize that not a little is secondary, and that our chapters have affinity with these as well as with the genuine passages. Moreover it betrays the same relationship to other and later writings from Ezekiel onwards, in particular to the later sections of the Book of Isaiah. The situation reflected in the oracle is not that of Zedekiah's fourth year. Israel and Judah are in exile (l. 4, 5, 8, 19, 28, 33, li. 34, 45); the Temple has been violated by the Babylonians (l. 28, li. 11, 51). It is true that the captivity of Israel had happened long before, and that a large body of Jews had been deported with Jehoiachin, together with Temple vessels. But the language suggests that a much more drastic fate had fallen on city and people. It can hardly be satisfied by anything short of the catastrophe of 586. And since the writer anticipates that the overthrow of Babylon is near at hand, he cannot be identified with Jeremiah who expected its empire to last for seventy years. Nor is the attitude to practical issues the same. Jeremiah, in prospect of the long captivity, calms the excitement of the exiles and bids them acquiesce in their lot and pray for the peace of Babylon; the author of this prophecy anticipates its speedy downfall, and

Declare ye among the nations and publish, and set 2
up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon
is taken, Bel is put to shame, Merodach is [a] dismayed;

[a] Or, *broken down*

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excites the Jews with predictions of their approaching deliverance. And while the prophet believed that Babylon's time also would come, he betrays no exultation such as is so strongly expressed in this prophecy, nor any bitter, vindictive feelings for the wrongs inflicted on Judah. He looked on the Chaldeans as Yahweh's agents of chastisement for His people; our author sees in their overthrow Yahweh's vengeance for the judgement they have executed.

Since we have reason to suppose that Jeremiah wrote an oracle announcing the fate of Babylon, it is not impossible that it has been preserved in our prophecy. The earlier attempts by Movers and Hitzig to extract a genuine nucleus have met with no acceptance. But, with the example of the other oracles, it is by no means arbitrary to suppose that our prophecy may have grown up about a genuine kernel, as Rothstein believes. This cannot, however, be pointed out with any confidence; and, even if it exists, can form only a very small proportion of the whole.

The most obvious suggestion as to the date is that it belongs to the period immediately preceding the capture of Babylon by Cyrus in 538, that of Isa. xiii. 1—xiv. 23, and Isa. xl-lv. But its affinity with these and later writings makes such a date improbable, since it seems generally to be secondary rather than original. It would be a mistake to regard it as a purely literary production concerned with a dead issue. Babylon was not destroyed by Cyrus, but remained for several generations, its continued existence a perplexity to those who read the earlier prophecies of its utter ruin. To such perplexity our oracle seeks to give an answer.

In view of the numerous repetitions and the absence of any ordered development of the theme, it would be unprofitable to prefix the usual analysis to the annotations.

1. 2. It is remarkable how much repetition there is in this verse; 'publish,' 'put to shame,' 'dismayed,' are each repeated. But we should perhaps omit, with the LXX, 'and set up a standard; publish;' the setting up of the standard is not suitable here, and seems to be a gloss borrowed from Isa. xiii. 2, this chapter having several points of contact with our oracle.

Bel: properly an appellative, meaning 'lord,' but used also as a proper name. Bel came to be identified with **Merodach,** i.e. Marduk the chief god of Babylon. Here they seem to be distin-

her images are put to shame, her idols are [a] dismayed.
3 For out of the north there cometh up a nation against
her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall
dwell therein: they are fled, they are gone, both man and
4 beast. In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD,
the children of Israel shall come, they and the children
of Judah together; they shall go on their way weeping,
5 and shall seek the LORD their God. They shall inquire
concerning Zion with their faces [b] thitherward, *saying*,
Come ye, and [c] join yourselves to the LORD in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten.

6 My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have

[a] Or, *broken down* [b] † Heb. *hitherward*.
[c] Or, *they shall join themselves*

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guished. The gods of Babylon are put to confusion by the inevitable disaster that has overtaken their city.

idols: or 'idol blocks.' This contemptuous term is a favourite one with Ezekiel.

3. Cf. iv. 6, 7, 25. Jeremiah's characteristic 'out of the north,' applied to the Scythians and then the Babylonians, is here borrowed to describe the foe who is to destroy Babylon. It suits the Medes better than the Persians; but the north had a suggestion of mystery, and the mention of it heightens the terror. For the close of the verse cf. ix. 10.

4, 5. In these beautiful verses the author takes up the ideas of the reunion of Israel in their return to Zion, and of their penitence for their sin. Cf. iii. 12, 13, 18, 21–25, xxiii. 6, xxxi. 1, 9, 18, 19, xxxiii. 7.

5. thitherward. The literal rendering 'hitherward' should have been substituted; the author was accordingly resident in Palestine.

everlasting covenant: cf. xxxii. 40.

6. The verse describes the evil condition of the people, the shepherds who should have guided them aright have led them astray. The Hebrew text is uncertain, the rendering in the E.V. follows the Hebrew margin and the LXX. The consonantal text is generally rendered 'on the seducing mountains,' but 'apostate' would be a more accurate rendering than 'seducing.' There might be a reference to the high-places. It would be better to accept the rendering, 'they have turned them away on the caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place. All that found 7 them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and 8 go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he-goats before the flocks. For, lo, I will stir up and 9 cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be

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mountains.' Some think that this refers to the worship at the high-places, on the ground that the mountains afford a suitable pasturage for sheep. But this introduces a prosaic touch into the metaphor. The meaning is that instead of being kept in the green pastures, beside the still waters, they have been sent out on the bleak mountains, where grass is scarce, where movement is difficult and sometimes dangerous, and where they can easily be lost. They wander from mountain to mountain, vainly seeking to better their lot, and cannot find their way back to the pastures from which they have strayed. Cf. xxiii. 1 ff., Ezek. xxxiv.

7. The verse is an echo of ii. 3, where we read 'all that devour him shall be held guilty.' Here Israel's enemies devour him, and say 'We are not guilty,' as their words should be rendered to retain the correspondence with ii. 3. Cf. also Zech. xi. 5, which apparently imitates our passage.

the habitation of justice. This description of Yahweh as 'the homestead of righteousness' is peculiar, and apparently due to a misunderstanding of xxxi. 23, where in the Hebrew the words immediately follow, though they do not stand in apposition to 'Yahweh,' but are a designation of Jerusalem.

even the LORD. The words are very awkward in the Hebrew, and should be omitted, with the LXX.

8. The writer exhorts the Jews to leave Babylon in haste, echoing Isa. xlviii. 20; but he employs an original metaphor. As the he-goats push to the front to pass through the gate when it is opened, before the rest of the flock, so let the Jews be the first to leave; other peoples will follow their example.

9. The reason for the exhortation to escape with speed; the northern nations are being incited to attack Babylon.

taken: their arrows shall be as of [a] an expert mighty man;
10 [b] none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a spoil:
11 all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD. Because
ye are glad, because ye rejoice, O ye that plunder mine
heritage, because ye are wanton as an heifer [c] that treadeth
12 out *the corn*, and neigh as strong horses; your mother
shall be sore ashamed; she that bare you shall be confounded:
behold, she shall be the hindermost of the
13 nations, a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because

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[a] Or, according to another reading, *a mighty man that maketh childless* [b] †Or, *that returneth not* [c] †Or, *at grass*

expert mighty man. This is preferable to the margin, which presupposes a slightly different vocalization.

none . . . in vain: i.e. the arrows all strike their mark. But since arrows do not 'return' as the sword does, after doing execution, to its sheath (2 Sam. i. 22), it is better to adopt the margin, taking the reference to be to the warrior, but rendering 'that returneth not empty,' i. e. the warrior wins great spoil, as the next verse says.

11. Because. This rendering yields the sense that the punishment on Babylon described in 12 is due to the exultation of the Babylonians over the spoiling of Judah. But it is better to render 'Though,' i. e. in spite of their affluence and luxury they shall be brought low. There is a suggestion that the wealth which makes their riotous living possible is gained by plunder of other nations, Israel of course being singled out for special mention.

that treadeth out the corn. This follows the punctuation of the Hebrew text; the meaning is that the cattle engaged in threshing could eat their fill since they were unmuzzled (Deut. xxv. 4), and, as we see clearly from Hos. x. 11, the work of treading out the corn was pleasanter than ploughing with a rider on the back. The marginal rendering is that of the LXX and Vulgate; it presupposes a slightly different punctuation. The verb rendered 'ye are wanton' occurs also in Mal. iii. 20 (E.V. iv. 2), 'and gambol as calves of the stall.' It suits calves better than an heifer, and we should probably slightly alter the Hebrew and read 'as calves at grass,' which is presupposed by the LXX. For 'neigh' cf. v. 8, where, however, it is metaphorical.

12. your mother: i. e. Babylon: the city is regarded as mother of the inhabitants.

a wilderness . . . desert: cf. ii. 6, li. 43.

13. See xviii. 16, xix. 8, xxv. 9, 11, xlix. 17.

of the wrath of the LORD it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate: every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues. Set 14
yourselves in array against Babylon round about, all ye that bend the bow; shoot at her, spare no arrows: for she hath sinned against the LORD. Shout against her 15
round about; she hath [a] submitted herself; her bulwarks are fallen, her walls are thrown down: for it is the vengeance of the LORD; take vengeance upon her; as she hath done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, 16
and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.

Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him 17
away: first the king of Assyria hath devoured him; and last this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones. Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God 18

[a] Heb. *given her hand.*

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14. Once more the foe is incited against Babylon: cf. 9, where also the arrows are specially mentioned; cf. Isa. xiii. 18.

15. submitted herself: probably the correct sense; the margin gives the literal rendering.

bulwarks. The word occurs here only; its sense is disputed, but the R.V. is probably right in the main.

16. Agriculture is at an end in Babylonia, and the foreign residents flee back to their country for fear of the foe (Isa. xiii. 14). The two halves of the verse seem to have no connexion.

17. sheep. The term is probably collective. Cf. 6, but here the point is not simply that the flock has lost its way, but that it has fallen a victim to the lions. Assyria devoured the flesh, and then, to consummate the destruction, Babylon has gnawed the bones. The reference is to the captivity of the Ten Tribes and the oppression of Judah by Assyria, and the deportation of Judah to Babylon.

18. This verse certainly suggests that the Babylonian empire had not been overthrown. Still the date of the prophecy cannot be settled on this ground; it is written from Jeremiah's standpoint.

30 the Holy One of Israel. Therefore shall her young men
fall in her streets, and all her men of war shall be brought
31 to silence in that day, saith the LORD. Behold, I am
against thee, [a] O thou proud one, saith the Lord, the
LORD of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that I will
32 visit thee. And [b] the proud one shall stumble and fall,
and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in
his cities, and it shall devour all that are round about
him.

33 Thus saith the LORD of hosts: The children of Israel
and the children of Judah are oppressed together: and
all that took them captives hold them fast; they refuse
34 to let them go. Their redeemer is strong; the LORD of
hosts is his name: he shall throughly plead their cause,
that he may give rest to the earth, and disquiet the inhabi-
35 tants of Babylon. A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith
the LORD, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon
36 her princes, and upon her wise men. A sword is upon

[a] †Heb. *O Pride.* [b] †Heb. *Pride.*

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30. See xlix. 26, from which it is repeated. Graf took it to be a quotation written on the margin here, and mistakenly inserted in the text; but his view is not generally accepted.

31, 32. The margins would perhaps have been better: 'Pride' is used as a proper name for Babylon, here and in the next verse. In these verses xxi. 13, 14 are clearly before the writer's mind. For the close of 31 cf. 27^b, for 32^a cf. Amos v. 2.

33. The association of the northern tribes with Judah is curious, since it was the Assyrians who carried away the former into captivity. For the close of the verse cf. Isa. xiv. 17.

34. The earth is to be at peace by the discomfiture of the Babylonians who have so long disturbed its rest: cf. Isa. xiv. 5–8, 16.

Their redeemer is strong: cf. Prov. xxiii. 11; Isa. xliii. 14, xlvii. 4.

35. We should perhaps render 'Sword, be upon the Chaldeans!' and similarly throughout the passage.

36. boasters. The reference is generally taken to be to the lying prophets and diviners. P. Haupt, with a slight correction, reads a Babylonian word meaning 'diviners.'

the [a] boasters, and they shall dote: a sword is upon her
mighty men, and they shall be dismayed. A sword is 37
upon their horses, and upon their chariots, and upon all
the mingled people that are in the midst of her, and they
shall become as women: a sword is upon her treasures,
and they shall be robbed. A drought is upon her waters, 38
and they shall be dried up: for it is a land of graven
images, and they are mad upon [b] idols. [c] Therefore the 39
wild beasts of the desert with the [d] wolves shall dwell there,
and the ostriches shall dwell therein: and it shall be no
more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from
generation to generation. As when God overthrew Sodom 40
and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the
LORD; so shall no man dwell there, neither shall any son

[a] Heb. *boastings.* [b] Heb. *terrors.* [c] See Isa. xiii. 21, 22
[d] Heb. *howling creatures.*

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37. the mingled people: see xxv. 20. Generally it is thought that foreign soldiers hired by Babylon are intended. Cheyne thinks of 'the Arabian population in Babylonia' (*Enc. Bib.* 3099).

38. drought. The word in the unpointed text is the same as that used for 'sword' in the rest of the passage; and we should probably render it 'sword' here. The present pointing seems to be due to the feeling that 'sword' was incongruous in this context, whereas 'drought' was suitable. But the words are not to be pressed with prosaic literalism; and the symmetry of the passage is disturbed if 'drought' is substituted for 'sword.'

and they are mad upon idols: rather 'and with idols do they make themselves mad;' but the Versions read, with different pointing, 'and they boast themselves of idols,' as in Ps. xcvii. 7. The 'idols' are properly 'Terrors,' the hideous figures worshipped by the people.

39, 40. Now follows a passage which, like Isa. xxxiv. 9–17, is based on Isa. xiii. 19–22. The second verse is practically identical with xlix. 18. The ruins of a city are to this day avoided by the Bedawin, who believe that they are the haunt not of wild animals alone but of uncanny creatures. In this passage the latter seem to be absent. 'The wild beasts of the desert' may be the correct rendering; some translate 'wild cats' (so Bochart). For 'wolves' some prefer 'jackals.'

41 of man sojourn therein. [a] Behold, a people cometh from
the north; and a great nation, and many kings shall be
42 stirred up from the uttermost parts of the earth. They
lay hold on bow and spear; they are cruel, and have no
mercy; their voice roareth like the sea, and they ride
upon horses; every one set in array, as a man to the
43 battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon. The king
of Babylon hath heard the fame of them, and his hands
wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of him, *and* pangs
44 as of a woman in travail. [b] Behold, he shall come up
like a lion from the pride of Jordan against the strong
habitation: but I will suddenly make them run away from
her; and whoso is chosen, him will I appoint over her:
for who is like me? and who will appoint me a time?
and who is the shepherd that will stand before me?
45 Therefore hear ye the counsel of the LORD, that he hath
taken against Babylon; and his purposes, that he hath
purposed against the land of the Chaldeans: Surely they
shall drag them away, *even* the little ones of the flock;
surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them.
46 At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth trembleth,
and the cry is heard among the nations.

51 Thus saith the LORD: Behold, I will raise up against

[a] See ch. vi. 22-24. [b] See ch. xlix. 19-21.

41-43. These verses are copied, with trifling alterations and necessary adjustment to Babylon, from vi. 22-24.

44-46. These verses are taken from xlix. 19-21, with necessary changes due to the change in reference from Edom to Babylon and some other alterations. See the notes on that passage.

46. among the nations. The noise of Edom's fall is heard in the Red Sea; that of Babylon's fall 'among the nations.'

li. 1. Leb-kamai. The meaning is explained in the margin ('heart' means 'centre'); the cypher is *Atbash*, for which see notes on xxv. 26. Since the LXX read 'Kasdim,' i. e. Chaldea, it is

Babylon, and against them that dwell in [a] Leb-kamai,
a destroying wind. And I will send unto Babylon 2
[b] strangers, that shall fan her; and they shall empty her
land: for in the day of trouble they shall be against her
round about. [c] Let not the archer bend his bow, and let 3
him not lift himself up in his coat of mail: and spare ye
not her young men; [d] destroy ye utterly all her host.
And they shall fall down slain in the land of the Chaldeans, 4
and thrust through in her streets. For Israel is not 5

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[a] That is, *The heart of them that rise up against me.* According to ancient tradition, a cypher for *Casdim*, that is, Chaldea.
[b] †Or, *fanners* [c] Or, as otherwise read, *Against* him that *bendeth let the archer bend his bow, and against* him that *lifteth himself up &c.* [d] Heb. *devote ye all &c.*

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probable that this was the original text, and that the substitution of 'Leb-kamai' originated in an ingenious marginal gloss.

a destroying wind. A comparison with 11 suggests that we should render, with most recent scholars, 'the spirit of a destroyer.'

2. strangers. The margin 'fanners' is better, since the noun thus corresponds with the verb, and this sense, which requires simply a slight change in the pointing, is adopted by the Syriac and Vulgate. The metaphor is taken from the winnowing of corn.

3. The text is uncertain and probably corrupt. The rendering in R.V. text is preferable to that in the margin; the meaning is, Let the armies of Babylon make no resistance to the enemy. But this does not suit the latter part of the verse, where the enemy is addressed. Various suggestions have been made to cure the corruption; none is quite satisfactory. The simplest is that of Cornill, that the negatives should be omitted; the words will then have reference to the assault of the enemy on Babylon. It is of course a precarious emendation, though supported by the LXX.

4. Cf. Isa. xiii. 15, Ezek. xxviii. 23, Lam. iv. 9.

5. This is a difficult verse; Graf thought that it must have been inserted by another hand, on account of the lack of connexion with the context. The word rendered 'forsaken' is literally 'widowed' (cf. Isa. liv. 4); but strangely the masculine is used, whereas elsewhere Yahweh is the husband, Israel the wife. The second half of the verse is also difficult. By 'their land' it seems as if the land of Israel and Judah is meant, the sense being that Yahweh has not forsaken them though their guilt might well have caused Him to do so. But the Hebrew, especially in view of l. 29,

forsaken, nor Judah, of his God, of the LORD of hosts;
though their land is full of guilt against the Holy One of
6 Israel. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and save every
man his life; be not cut off in her iniquity: for it is the
time of the LORD's vengeance; he will render unto her
7 a recompence. Babylon hath been a golden cup in the
LORD's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations
have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.

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favours the reference to Babylonia, and we should in that case substitute 'but' for 'though.' If, however, 'their land' means Babylonia, the two halves of the verse seem to be in their wrong order, and 5^b should follow 4, and the word rendered 'though' should bear its usual sense 'for' (so Cornill). Verse 5^a still remains somewhat isolated; Cornill thinks that a couplet has fallen out after it, and suggests that it may have run as in Isa. liv. 5, 'But his creator is his husband, and his redeemer the Holy One of Israel.'

6. The people to whom this is addressed are not named; they might be the foreign residents generally, but a reference to 45, where the verse is largely repeated, favours the view that the Jews are intended, as in l. 6 and the Deutero-Isaianic parallels Isa. xlviii. 20, lii. 12. The reason for flight is that they may not be involved in the overthrow of Babylon: cf. Rev. xviii. 4. For the latter part of the verse cf. l. 15, Isa. xxxiv. 8, lix. 18, lxiii. 4.

7. The passage recalls the vision of the cup in xxv. But the resemblance is superficial. There the cup was that of Yahweh's fury. Babylon might no doubt be called a cup in Yahweh's hand, in the sense that she was His instrument in the execution of judgement, just as Assyria was the rod of His anger (Isa. x. 5). But here the idea is rather of her luxury and sinfulness, which have exerted a baneful influence on the nations. The thought is therefore quite parallel to that in Rev. xvii. 4, which is based on this passage, and Nah. iii. 4. Only we should omit 'in the Lord's hand' as an insertion under the influence of xxv. 15, 16; since Yahweh can hardly have been represented as using Babylon to demoralize the nations. The epithet 'golden,' on the other hand, is not to be struck out on the ground that a metal cup is not broken by a fall (8). It is deliberately introduced to suggest the seductive luxury of Babylon, and the subject in 8 is 'Babylon'; the metaphor of the cup is still in the author's mind, but by substituting the literal for the figurative, he avoids the incongruity of representing the golden cup as broken.

Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; 8
take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We 9
would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake
her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her
judgement reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to
the skies. The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: 10
come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD
our God. Make [a] sharp the arrows; [b] hold firm the 11

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[a] †Or, *bright* Heb. *clean.* [b] Heb. *fill.*

8. The opening of the verse is derived from Isa. xxi. 9. The atter part introduces a new metaphor indicating Babylon's desperate condition: cf. viii. 22, xxx. 12, 13, and especially xlvi. 11. The words are not spoken with sympathy but with triumphant rony.

9. Since the speakers in 10 are the Jews, it is natural to suppose that they are the speakers in this verse. But then we have the strange assertion at the beginning of the verse that they would have healed Babylon, which is quite irreconcilable with the attitude of the Jewish captives. Nor do the words 'let us go every one nto his own country' suit the Jews, but must be spoken by exiles from different countries. To strike out the clause or part of it is arbitrary. We must then assume that the speakers are foreign residents in Babylon and presumably not captives, since the latter would hail the downfall of the oppressor. They answer the ronical invitation at the end of 8. They have been able to find no cure, and must abandon her to her fate, since her guilt and her punishment mount to the skies.

10. If the view taken in the preceding note is correct, this verse cannot continue the utterance in 9, in spite of the apparent inks between the two—the contrast between 'her judgement' and our righteousness,' and the parallel between 'forsake her, and et us go' and 'come, and let us declare.' The first clause means hat Yahweh has vindicated the Jews, put them in the right, by he overthrow of Babylon.

11. The exhortations in this verse and the next are addressed to he enemy. The first clause comes in strangely, the second clause arries on the thought of 10, while the first clause would be more n place in connexion with the other preparations for conflict mentioned in 12, or in 27 to which Cornill transfers it. The rrows are to be polished (cf. Isa. xlix. 2), so that they may pierce heir victims more easily. The rendering 'hold firm the shields' s dubious. The verb, as the margin says, means 'fill,' so that the

[a] shields: the LORD hath stirred up the spirit of the kings
of the Medes; because his device is against Babylon, to
destroy it: for it is the vengeance of the LORD, the ven-
12 geance of his temple. Set up a standard against the walls
of Babylon, make the watch strong, set the watchmen,
prepare the ambushes: for the LORD hath both devised
and done that which he spake concerning the inhabitants
13 of Babylon. O thou that dwellest upon many waters,
abundant in treasures, thine end is come, the measure of
14 thy [b] covetousness. The LORD of hosts hath sworn by

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[a] Or, *suits of armour* [b] Or, *dishonest gain*

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sense is rather 'gird the shields closely to you.' Giesebrecht reads a verb meaning to 'scour' or 'polish' (*mirṭu*). Rothstein suggests 'anoint' (cf. 2 Sam. i. 21). But the translation 'shields' is not certain; W. E. Barnes argues in detail for the meaning 'armour' or 'equipment' (*Expository Times*, x. 43–45); if his reasoning is sound the margin 'suits of armour' should be adopted, and no emendation of the verb is required.

the kings of the Medes. The LXX reading, 'the king of the Medes' should be substituted. The reference to the Medes seems to have been suggested by Isa. xiii. 17.

for it is . . . temple: see on l. 28; cf. xlvi. 10, l. 15; Isa. xxxiv. 8.

12. Exhortation to begin the blockade of Babylon and set ambuscades, not merely to intercept any who ventured out of the city, or to cut off stragglers after a sortie, but to take advantage of a sortie to push through the gates (cf. Joshua viii. 12–19, Judges xx. 29–40). The 'watchmen' are not those who are placed on the alert to see what happens, but those who guard the city closely.

13. many waters: cf. l. 38, Rev. xvii. 1, Ps. cxxxvii. 1. The Euphrates, the numerous canals, and the pools (cf. 32 marg.) gave the Babylonians a sense of their security, as their rocky fastnesses gave Edom (xlix. 16), and the Nile and the canals gave No-Amon (Nah. iii. 8).

the measure of thy covetousness. This clause has occasioned much discussion; the word rendered 'measure' means 'cubit;' while that rendered 'covetousness' also means 'cutting off.' The sense is that the prescribed limit of Babylon's existence has been reached, and it will now be cut off. The metaphor is taken from weaving, and is best illustrated by Isa. xxxviii. 12.

14. Cf. Amos vi. 8. The sense of the R.V. is that Yahweh will certainly fill Babylon with enemies as numerous, rapacious, and destructive as locusts. Another view is that we should translate

himself, *saying*, Surely I will fill thee with men, as with
he cankerworm; and they shall lift up a shout against
hee.

[a] He hath made the earth by his power, he hath esta- 15
blished the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding
hath he stretched out the heavens: when he uttereth his 16
voice, there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and he
causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth;
he maketh lightnings for the rain, and bringeth forth the
wind out of his treasuries. Every man is become brutish 17
and is without knowledge; every goldsmith is put to
shame by his graven image: for his molten image is false-
hood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, 18
a work of delusion: in the time of their visitation they
shall perish. The portion of Jacob is not like these; 19
for he is the former of all things; and *Israel* is the tribe
of his inheritance: the LORD of hosts is his name.

Thou art my [b] battle axe and weapons of war: and 20

[a] See ch. x. 12–16. [b] †Or, *maul*

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though I fill thee,' and explain that, be Babylon's population multitudinous as the locusts, the shout of triumph will yet be raised over her by her conquerors. The 'cankerworm' seems to be the locust in its pupa stage.

15–19. These verses repeat, with very trifling difference, x. 12–16, and the notes on that passage must be consulted for the exegesis. It is difficult to understand why it was inserted here, where it is quite irrelevant. Apparently it was introduced by some reader to substantiate the certainty that Yahweh's oath will be accomplished, by asserting His omnipotence and the impotence of idols.

20–23. In this passage, marked with similar repetition as l. 35–38, it is not clear what power is addressed. But the arguments that it is Babylon seem to be convincing. When the interpolation 15–19 has been removed, 20–23 connects with 13, 14, in which Babylon is addressed. Further, in l. 23 Babylon is described as 'the hammer of the whole earth,' and immediately after our passage as a 'destroying mountain . . . which destroyest all the earth' (25). Other identifications are unsuitable, because nothing hints that there is a change in the reference of the second person.

with thee will I break in pieces the nations; and with
21 thee will I destroy kingdoms; and with thee will I break
in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will
I break in pieces the chariot and him that rideth therein
22 and with thee will I break in pieces man and woman
and with thee will I break in pieces the old man and the
youth; and with thee will I break in pieces the young
23 man and the maid; and with thee will I break in pieces
the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in
pieces the husbandman and his yoke *of oxen*; and with
thee will I break in pieces [a] governors and deputies.
24 And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants
of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in
your sight, saith the LORD.

[a] Or, *lieutenants*

The future tenses in the R.V. should be changed into presents, expressing habitual action. Verse 24 favours to some extent the other view, but is not incompatible with that adopted.

20. battle axe. The word means rather 'battle-hammer' or 'club;' 'mace' would be a good rendering. This formidable weapon was much used by the Assyrians, probably also by the Babylonians.

weapons. Perhaps, with a change in punctuation, we should read the singular.

23. governors and deputies. The same combination occurs in Ezek. xxiii. 6, 12, 23, where it is rendered 'governors and rulers.' Both words are of Assyrian origin; the former might be rendered 'satraps,' the latter 'viceroys' (so Lofthouse on Ezek. xxiii. 6). The use of these terms does not necessarily imply that the mace breaks the magnates of the Babylonian empire; similar officials might be found in other kingdoms.

24. But while Babylon is the hammer in the hands of the Almighty, He will recompense her for her overthrow of Zion. Such a statement is out of harmony with Jeremiah's point of view. It is true that Isaiah can speak of Assyria as the rod of Yahweh's anger, and yet announce that when Yahweh has chastised His people with it, He will break it and fling it aside. But Assyria is not punished for its mis-handling of Judah, but for its boastfulness against Yahweh (Isa. x. 5–15).

in your sight: to be connected with 'I will render.'

Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, 25
saith the LORD, which destroyest all the earth: and
I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee
down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt
mountain. And they shall not take of thee a stone for 26
a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be
desolate for ever, saith the LORD. Set ye up a standard 27
in the land, blow the trumpet among the nations,[a] prepare
the nations against her, call together against her the kingdoms
of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz: appoint a marshal

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[a] Heb. *sanctify*.

25, 26. Since Babylon is situated in a plain, the reference to it as a mountain must be metaphorical; it is so called as lifted above other countries. Whether one who was actually familiar with the country would have chosen a figurative designation which was literally so inappropriate is questionable. Probably, as Budde points out, Ezekiel's prophecy against mount Seir (Ezek. xxxv) is before the writer's mind. The phrase 'destroying mountain' comes from 2 Kings xxiii. 13 (see R.V. margin). It is natural to think of the 'mountain' as a volcano. But this is very questionable: the mountain is regarded as itself burnt to a cinder, rather than as belching forth fire, and therefore as yielding no stones suitable for building, the action of the fire making the stones unfit for the purpose. The writer may have thought of the mountain as a great mass of limestone (cf. Isa. xxxiii. 12), itself piled high upon cliffs down which it is cast.

26. The verse seems to be an imitation of Isa. xxx. 14.

27. Once more the author begins a description of the attack on Babylon.

Ararat (Gen. viii. 4, 2 Kings xix. 37) is the Assyrian *Urarṭu* and the Armenian *Ayrarat*. It embraced part of Armenia, but the limits varied: properly it was in the northern part of Armenia, north-west of Lake Van. **Minni** is the cuneiform *Mannai*, and is placed by some between Lake Van and Lake Urumia, by others to the south or south-east of the latter. **Ashkenaz** presumably in the neighbourhood of the preceding. It may be inferred from Gen. x. 3 that they were akin to the Cimmerians. It is often identified with the Assyrian *Ashguz*; the 'n' may be mistaken insertion in the Hebrew, or it may have been in the original word but omitted in Assyrian.

marshal. The Hebrew word occurs also in Nah. iii. 17, there also in connexion with locusts. It is generally regarded as the

against her; cause the horses to come up as the rough
28 cankerworm. [a] Prepare against her the nations, the kings
of the Medes, the governors thereof, and all the deputies
29 thereof, and all the land of his dominion. And the land
trembleth and is in pain: for the purposes of the LORD
against Babylon do stand, to make the land of Babylon
30 a desolation, without inhabitant. The mighty men of
Babylon have forborne to fight, they remain in their strong
holds; their might hath failed; they are become as
women: her dwelling places are set on fire; her bars
31 are broken. One post shall run to meet another, and one
messenger to meet another, to shew the king of Babylon
32 that his city is taken on every quarter: and the [b] passages
are surprised, and the [c] reeds they have burned with fire,
and the men of war are affrighted.

[a] Heb. *sanctify*. [b] Or, *fords* [c] Or, *marshes* Heb. *pools*.

Assyrian *dupšarru*, 'tablet-writer.' Here it might mean a scribe who had the duty of enlisting the soldiers; but this does not suit Nah. iii. 17, where they are compared to 'swarms of grasshoppers,' nor yet the present passage, since, as Graf pointed out, the term should be taken as a collective, parallel to the collective singular rendered 'horses' in the next clause. Some type of troop, as he says, seems to be intended.

the rough cankerworm: the locust in its pupa-stage, when the wings are still enclosed in sheaths which stand out on the back. Their worst ravages are accomplished in this stage.

28. Read 'king' for 'kings,' and 'his governors,' 'his deputies. On these terms see note on 23.

30. A vivid description of the capture of the city now follows.

31. post, or 'courier,' literally 'runner.' The couriers and newsbearers meet each other as they come from all sides to tell the king that the city is captured.

32. passages: i. e. ferries, not fords.

reeds. As the margin indicates, the word properly means 'pools,' but to say that the pools are burned is too extravagant an hyperbole. The text seems to be corrupt. Duhm suggests 'defences,' 'barricades.' Graetz, Cheyne in the *Pulpit Commentary*, and now Coste, read 'palaces.' Cornill supposes that some words have fallen out; similarly Rothstein.

For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: 33
The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing-floor at the
time when it is trodden; yet a little while, and the time
of harvest shall come for her. Nebuchadrezzar the king of 34
Babylon hath devoured [a] me, he hath crushed [a] me, he
hath made [a] me an empty vessel, he hath swallowed [a] me
up like a dragon, he hath filled his maw with my delicates;
he hath cast [a] me out. [b] The violence done to me and 35
to my flesh be upon Babylon, shall the [c] inhabitant of
Zion say; and, My blood be upon the inhabitants of
Chaldea, shall Jerusalem say. Therefore thus saith the 36

[a] Another reading is, *us.* [b] Heb. *My wrong and my flesh.* [c] Heb. *inhabitress.*

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33. When the harvest-time approaches, the threshing-floor is trodden down smooth and hard, and when the corn has been reaped it is threshed upon it. The metaphor is a fine one, but is not clearly carried out. At first Babylon is compared to the threshing-floor itself; as this is trodden down flat, so it will be trampled on and levelled with the ground. A more conventional metaphor would have been to liken it to the corn on the threshing-floor trampled by oxen who draw the threshing-sledge over it: cf. Isa. xxi. 10, Amos i. 3, Mic. iv. 13. This is perhaps suggested by the last clause: Babylon is like the corn which is to be reaped and then threshed. The sense of this clause, however, may be that Babylon is like a cornfield, which is soon to be reaped, stripped of all its golden splendour. But whichever view be adopted, we seem to have two metaphors combined.

the time of harvest. We should perhaps read, with LXX and Syriac, 'the harvest,' or, with a slight change, 'the reaper.'

34. Israel recounts the injuries the king of Babylon has done her. The R.V. rightly prefers the singular pronoun 'me' throughout. The reference in the 'empty vessel' is to the loss of all which she has suffered. The king is likened to the mythical dragon, for which we may compare the designations of the world-empires in Isa. xxvii. 1. He has swallowed the people, and also the treasures it had formerly enjoyed.

cast me out. This is the sense, it requires a slightly different pointing; the verb as pointed means 'rinsed me out.'

35. Cf. Gen. xvi. 5.

36. To this invocation of vengeance on Babylon, Yahweh responds with the assurance that He will avenge His people upon

LORD: Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance
for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her fountain
37 dry. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place
for jackals, an astonishment, and an hissing, without
38 inhabitant. They shall roar together like young lions;
39 they shall growl as lions' whelps. When they are heated,
I will make their feast, and I will make them drunken,
that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and
40 not wake, saith the LORD. I will bring them down like
41 lambs to the slaughter, like rams with he-goats. How is
[a] Sheshach taken! and the praise of the whole earth surprised!
how is Babylon become [b] a desolation among
42 the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is
43 covered with the [c] multitude of the waves thereof. Her
cities are become [b] a desolation, a dry land, and a desert,

[a] See ch. xxv. 26. [b] Or, *an astonishment* [c] Or, *tumult*

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her. The 'sea' is either the Euphrates (called so like the Nile, Isa. xviii. 2, xix. 5; Nah. iii. 8), or the lake dug by Nebuchadnezzar. In Herodotus (I. 185) we have an account of a lake built by Nitocris.

37. Cf. ix. 11, x. 22, xviii. 16; Isa. xiii. 22.

38. The Babylonians are like lions growling with satisfaction over their prey: cf. Amos iii. 4, Isa. v. 29.

39. Cf. 57. The metaphor glides from the lions feasting, to men at a banquet, who are overcome by wine and pass into the everlasting sleep

When they are heated. The sense is not quite clear; it is generally taken to be when they are hot with desire. Then Yahweh prepares their drinking-banquet. Giesebrecht reads 'when I am hot,' i. e. when my wrath burns.

rejoice. This does not suit the context. The LXX rendered 'be stupefied.' This, as Giesebrecht, followed by several scholars, thinks, probably implies a Hebrew verb meaning 'to faint,' as in Isa. li. 20 (*y^{e}ullāphū*).

40. This verse is based on Isa. xxxiv. 6, 7.

41. Sheshach: i. e. Babel: see note on xxv. 26. It is omitted in LXX and Syriac.

42. The sea: not the literal Euphrates, as some take it, but the multitudinous invaders. Cf. Isa. viii. 7, 8.

43. Cf. ii. 6, l. 12, 40.

a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. And I will [a] do judgement upon Bel 44 in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up; and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him: yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall.

My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and save 45 yourselves every man from the fierce anger of the LORD. And let not your heart faint, neither fear ye for the rumour 46 that shall be heard in the land; for a rumour shall come one year, and after that in another year *shall come* a rumour,

[a] Heb. *visit upon.*

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44. Bel (see note on l. 2) will be compelled to disgorge what he has swallowed (see 34). This is not simply the wealth of the nations, but the nations themselves. The passage is thus parallel to the story of the swallowing and vomiting forth of Jonah by the fish, which seems to be a figurative description of the exile and return of Israel.

44^b–49^a. This passage (from 'yea, the wall') is omitted in the LXX. Duhm thinks that it is a first draft of 49^b–53, which was substituted for it by the author or the editor. Verse 45 is parallel to 50, and 47 is largely repeated in 52. Rothstein practically agrees with Duhm; but Cornill agrees with Hitzig that the omission in the LXX was occasioned by the accidental passing from 'Babylon shall fall' in 44 to 'Babylon shall fall' in 49. And in view of the difference between 44^b–49^a and 49^b–53, this is the safer view to take.

the wall of Babylon shall fall. This is not very appropriate in this connexion. Cornill thinks that the parallelism requires a reference to a deity, and suggests 'the Desire of Babylon shall fall,' that is, the chief goddess of Babylon; he compares Dan. xi. 37, 'the desire of women,' which seems from the context to mean a deity, perhaps Tammuz.

45. Cf. 6; Isa. lii. 11.

46. The passage is difficult. The Hebrew text needs some change, but the general sense is given in the R.V. Moreover the passage seems to suggest, in contrast to the general tenor of the oracle, that year after year may go by, while one magnate wars with another, and this rumour gives place to that, and the hope of deliverance seems to grow more and more remote. But we need not assume that the author expected a long period to elapse in

47 and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgement upon the graven images of Babylon, and her whole land shall be ashamed; and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her.
48 Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for joy over Babylon; for the spoilers shall
49 come unto her from the north, saith the LORD. [a] As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at
50 Babylon shall fall the slain of all the [b] land. Ye that have escaped the sword, go ye, stand not still; remember the LORD from afar, and let Jerusalem come into
51 your mind. We are ashamed, because we have heard reproach; confusion hath covered our faces: for strangers

[a] Or, *Both Babylon is to fall, O ye slain of Israel, and at &c*
[b] †Or, *earth*

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such struggles and rumours. Four or five years would be a brief prelude to the downfall of an empire, and yet it might be a time of racking suspense, intolerably long to live through day by day.

47. This is largely identical with 52, and on that ground deleted by Giesebrecht. 'Therefore' is unsuitable; we might read 'for,' the present text having arisen from assimilation to 52 and the frequency with which 'Therefore' is used with this formula. Cornill suggests 'rulers' instead of 'graven images,' which he thinks is also due to 52. It fits on to the close of 46, and the triple reference to the punishment of Babylon's gods in 44, 47, 52 is thus avoided.

all her slain shall fall: i.e. her inhabitants shall fall slain.

48. Cf. Isa. xliv. 23; for 48^b cf. 53^b.

49. The text is difficult. In the former part of the verse we should render (cf. margin) 'Babel also is to fall, O ye slain of Israel.' But it would be better, repeating a consonant, to read 'for the slain of Israel,' and continue 'As for Babel have fallen the slain of all the earth.'

50. The Jews, who have escaped death at the hands of the Babylonians, are bidden remember Yahweh and bethink themselves of Jerusalem, with the intention of returning.

51. The reply of the Jews to the exhortation in 50. They are exposed to reproach and covered with confusion, since foreigners have penetrated into the sacred places of the Temple; see note on Lam. i. 10.

are come into the sanctuaries of the Lord's house. Where- 52
fore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will
do judgement upon her graven images; and through all
her land the wounded shall groan. Though Babylon 53
should mount up to heaven, and though she should fortify
the height of her strength, yet from me shall spoilers come
unto her, saith the Lord. The sound of a cry from 54
Babylon, and of great destruction from the land of the
Chaldeans! for the Lord spoileth Babylon, and destroyeth 55
out of her the great voice; and their waves roar like many
waters, the noise of their voice is uttered: for the spoiler 56
is come upon her, even upon Babylon, and her mighty
men are taken, their bows are broken in pieces: for the
Lord is a God of recompences, he shall surely requite.
And I will make drunk her princes and her wise men, her 57
governors and her deputies, and her mighty men; and
they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the
King, whose name is the Lord of hosts. Thus saith the 58
Lord of hosts: [a] The broad walls of Babylon shall be

[a] Or, *The walls of broad Babylon*

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52. Since Babylon has violated the sanctity of Yahweh's house, He will judge her idols. For 52^b cf. Ezek. xxvi. 15.

53. Cf. Isa. xiv. 12–14, Hab. ii. 9, Obad. 3; for 53^b cf. 48^b.

54. Cf. xlviii. 3, l. 22.

55. Yahweh spoils Babylon and brings to silence all its din; the foe sweeps into it like a great sea (cf. 42), its roar drowning the roar of the doomed city. Cf. vi. 23, Isa. xvii. 12.

56. The former part of the verse largely repeats 48^b, 53^b; for the latter part cf. Isa. lix. 18.

57. This closely resembles 39; for 'her governors and her deputies' cf. 23, 28.

58. walls. The singular should be read, as in LXX and Vulgate, in agreement with the singular adjective. The wall of Babylon was famous in antiquity; Herodotus says that it was 'fifty royal cubits in breadth, and in height two hundred' (I. 178), but his statement is generally regarded as exaggerated. The fortifications were actually destroyed by Darius.

utterly [a] overthrown, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; [b] and the peoples shall labour for vanity, and the nations for the fire; and they shall be weary.

59 [B] The word which Jeremiah the prophet commanded

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[a] †Or, *made bare* [b] See Hab. ii. 13.

and the peoples . . . weary. The text should be slightly altered, and we should read at the end, 'and the nations shall weary themselves for the fire.' The passage occurs, except for the interchange of 'vanity' and 'fire,' in Hab. ii. 13. Recent scholars generally agree with Graf that in the latter passage it is a quotation, and that both our passage and Hab. ii. 13 are derived from the same original. The point of the quotation here is that in the overthrow of Babylon we have a fulfilment of the ancient saying.

for the fire: i. e. their labour is all destined to come to nought.

li. 59-64. JEREMIAH BIDS SERAIAH READ THE BOOK OF BABYLON'S DOOM, AND THEN SINK IT IN THE EUPHRATES.

Since in 60^b the words written by Jeremiah, which Seraiah was to read and cast in the Euphrates, are apparently identified with the preceding oracle l. 2—li. 58, it is not unnatural that several scholars should have inferred that the story is as fictitious as the oracle itself is spurious. It is not necessary, however, to accept this identification, and Budde, followed by Cornill and Driver, argues forcibly for the historicity of the story, regarding the oracle entrusted to Seraiah as quite distinct from that which has preceded. The reference to Seraiah is itself a strong support to it. He was the brother of Baruch, though this is not emphasized as it would have been by a later writer anxious to guarantee his story; but we learn it simply by combining the account of his ancestry with that of Baruch (xxxii. 12). It is therefore probable that Seraiah undertook a journey to Babylon. So much is admitted by Duhm, who rejects the story as a whole. Whether Zedekiah went to Babylon at the same time is uncertain. The statement in the Hebrew text that Seraiah was 'quartermaster' does not prove a personal visit of the king to Babylon, though it agrees well with it, since he might have acted in this capacity for an embassy. According to the LXX, he was 'commissary of the tribute,' and went 'from Zedekiah.' In view of this uncertainty in the text we cannot feel sure that the king visited Babylon at this time. Nevertheless we can well understand, as Duhm himself allows, in view of the political situation, why he should visit Babylon, since suspicion

Seraiah the son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah, when he

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of complicity in the movement for revolt (xxvii) might well have fallen upon him (see vol. i, p. 23, and the Introduction to xxvii, xxviii). But if Seraiah went to Babylon, with or without the king, we may argue with some confidence that he received a commission from Jeremiah. The story of his journey would otherwise have hardly come down to us, since Baruch's memoirs seem to have been exclusively devoted to the prophet and his work. If the story related anything incredible about Jeremiah we should be justified in setting it aside. But he looked forward to the ultimate overthrow of Babylon, and while he would hardly have fanned the flame of fanatical patriotism among the exiles or the Jews who remained in Palestine, he may well have expressed his conviction in this striking way to an adherent. He would thus give his own circle a proof that his predictions of Babylon's triumph and Judah's downfall at her hands were not an abandonment of his faith in the restoration and high destiny of Israel, or tantamount to the prediction of Babylon's permanent supremacy. And if to this it be replied that he could have disabused them of any misconception as to his attitude by a strong clear statement of his real position, without adopting such a theatrical method as is here described, it may be replied that the method adopted was far more effective for his purpose. We are already familiar with the Hebrew idea of prophecy, that it did not merely announce the future but helped to create it. The prophetic word released energies which achieved its own fulfilment. But the solemn act was even more potent, in that the word was not only uttered and committed to writing, but taken to Babylon itself and sunk in its river, so that the doom it announced might cleave to the city and spread with the flow of the stream to its every part, and thus effect its final overthrow. Thus Jeremiah gave an assurance of its downfall not by any theatrical piece of symbolism, but by himself setting in motion the forces which were to effect it. That there is an element of sympathetic magic in the sinking of the stone with the oracle bound to it is not to be denied ; but it would be unreasonable to take Jeremiah out of his intellectual environment. The conception of prophecy as working out its own fulfilment is not magical ; the word of the living God was itself living and active, and could not return to Him void.

li. 59-64. Jeremiah's injunction to Seraiah when he accompanied him to Babylon. Jeremiah wrote on a scroll the doom of Babylon, and bade Seraiah, when he arrived there, read all the words, and afterwards sink the scroll in the Euphrates, saying, 'Thus shall Babylon sink, to rise no more.'

li. 59. Cf. xxxii. 12, from which we learn that Seraiah was

went with Zedekiah the king of Judah to Babylon in the
fourth year of his reign. Now Seraiah was [a] chief cham-
60 berlain. And Jeremiah wrote in [b] a book all the evil that
should come upon Babylon, [S] even all these words that
61 are written concerning Babylon. [B] And Jeremiah said
to Seraiah, When thou comest to Babylon, [c] then see that
62 thou read all these words, [S] and say, O LORD, thou
hast spoken concerning this place, to cut it off, that none
shall dwell therein, neither man nor beast, but that it
63 shall be desolate for ever. [B] And it shall be, when thou
hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt
bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates:
64 and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall

[a] †Or, *quartermaster* [b] Or, *one book* [c] Or, *and shalt see, and read . . . then shalt thou say &c.*

Baruch's brother. On the historicity of the journey and the question whether Zedekiah also went to Babylon see the Introduction to this section.

chief chamberlain. The margin ‘quartermaster’ is preferable; this official would have to arrange for the halting-place where the company would spend the night. Several prefer the LXX ‘commissary of the presents,’ i. e. the official who had charge of the presents for the king or the tribute due to him from Judah. It involves only slight change in the Hebrew consonants.

60. book: better scroll. The prophecy was probably quite short, and 60^{b}, which seems to identify it with l. 2—li. 58, should be omitted as an editorial link between the narrative and that oracle.

61. We are not to suppose that a public reading is intended, which would have been dangerous and also most unsuited to effect Jeremiah's wishes for the tranquillity of the exiles. It is a secret reading, Seraiah being either alone or with a chosen few. The reading aloud is part of the process by which the oracle is sped on its mission.

62. This verse interrupts the connexion between 61 and 63, and presents other difficulties. It has echoes of the long prophecy on Babylon, l. 3 and l. 26, and should probably be regarded as a later insertion.

63. With the deletion of 62 this connects immediately with 61. On the significance of the action see the Introduction to this section.

not rise again because of the evil that I will bring [a] upon her: and they shall be weary.

[R] Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.

[E] [b] Zedekiah was one and twenty years old when he 52
began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem:
and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of
Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in 2
the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim
had done. For through the anger of the LORD did it come 3
to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them
out from his presence: and Zedekiah rebelled against the
king of Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year 4
of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the

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[a] Or, *upon her. And they shall be weary: thus far &c.*

[b] See 2 Kings xxiv. 18, &c.

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64. and they shall be weary. This is no part of Seraiah's utterance. The subscription which follows, 'Thus far are the words of Jeremiah,' probably stood once after 58, and when it was removed to its present position, these words, which are one word in the Hebrew, were removed with it, presumably by accident, but possibly to indicate their original position. We might also interpret the words to mean that the words of Jeremiah went down simply to 'and they shall be weary' (58), and did not include 59–64[a]. But this is not so likely.

lii. THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM AND FATE OF THE PEOPLE.

This chapter is almost entirely taken from 2 Kings xxiv. 18—xxv. 21, 27–30, but lii. 28–30 is derived from some other source. In accordance with the custom usually adopted in commentaries on Jeremiah, only such notes are here given as are required by differences between the two texts or by additions to the narrative in Kings. For the general exposition of the chapter the student should turn to Dr. Skinner's Commentary on the Books of Kings in this series. The text in Jeremiah is often better preserved than in Kings, but it is unnecessary to make any minute comparison, or to repeat what Dr. Skinner has said on their mutual relations.

lii. 4–16. These verses are also found in a shortened form in xxxix. 1–10.

month, that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon came, he
and all his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against
5 it; and they built forts against it round about. So the
city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.
6 In the fourth month, in the ninth day of the month, the
famine was sore in the city, so that there was no bread for
7 the people of the land. Then a breach was made in the
city, and all the men of war fled, and went forth out of
the city by night by the way of the gate between the two
walls, which was by the king's garden; (now the Chaldeans
were against the city round about:) and they went by the
8 way of the Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued after the king, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains
of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him.
9 Then they took the king, and carried him up unto the
king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath; and
10 he [a] gave judgement upon him. And the king of Babylon
slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all
11 the princes of Judah in Riblah. And he put out the eyes
of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in
fetters, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison
till the day of his death.

12 Now in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month,
which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadrezzar,
king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the
guard, which stood before the king of Babylon, into Jeru-
13 salem: and he burned the house of the LORD, and the

[a] Heb. *spake judgements with him.*

10, 11. These verses appear in an abbreviated form in 2 Kings xxv. 7. Here we have added the slaughter of all the princes of Judah at Riblah, and the statement that Zedekiah was kept in prison to his death.

12. tenth. 2 Kings xxv. 7 reads **seventh.** We have no grounds for a decision between the two.

king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, even
[a] every great house, burned he with fire. And all the 14
army of the Chaldeans, that were with the captain of the
guard, brake down all the walls of Jerusalem round about.
Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away 15
captive of the poorest sort of the people, and the residue
of the people that were left in the city, and those that fell
away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue of
the [b] multitude. But Nebuzaradan the captain of the 16
guard left of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers
and husbandmen. And the pillars of brass that were in 17
the house of the LORD, and the bases and the brasen sea
that were in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldeans
break in pieces, and carried all the brass of them to
Babylon. The pots also, and the shovels, and the snuffers, 18
and the basons, and the spoons, and all the vessels of
brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. And 19
the cups, and the firepans, and the basons, and the pots,
and the candlesticks, and the spoons, and the bowls;
that which was of gold, in gold, and that which was of
silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away. The 20
two pillars, the one sea, and the twelve brasen bulls that
were under the bases, which king Solomon had made for
the house of the LORD: the brass of all these vessels was
without weight. And as for the pillars, the height of the 21
one pillar was eighteen cubits; and a line of twelve cubits
did compass it; and the thickness thereof was four fingers:

[a] Or, *every great man's house* [b] †Or, *artificers*

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15. Omit 'of the poorest sort of the people and:' it is a mistaken insertion from 16, which it contradicts, and is omitted in Kings.

17-23. The account in Kings is considerably abbreviated, especially 21-23 which in Kings occupies only one verse. Dr. Skinner's notes on 1 Kings vii should be consulted in addition to those on the parallels in 2 Kings.

22 it was hollow. And a chapiter of brass was upon it; and
the height of the one chapiter was five cubits, with network
and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of
brass: and the second pillar also had like unto these,
23 and pomegranates. And there were ninety and six pome-
granates [a] on the sides; all the pomegranates were an
24 hundred upon the network round about. And the captain
of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah
the second priest, and the three keepers of the [b] door:
25 and out of the city he took an [c] officer that was set over
the men of war; and seven men of them that saw the
king's face, which were found in the city; and the scribe
of the captain of the host, who mustered the people of the
land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that
26 were found in the midst of the city. And Nebuzaradan
the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to
27 the king of Babylon to Riblah. And the king of Babylon
smote them, and put them to death at Riblah in the land
of Hamath. So Judah was carried away captive out of
28 his land. [S] This is the people whom Nebuchadrezzar

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[a] Or, *on the outside* Heb. *towards the four winds.* [b] Heb. *threshold.* [c] Or, *eunuch*

---

25. seven: in 2 Kings xxv. 19, 'five.'

28-30. After 27 the two texts diverge, to unite again at 31. In 2 Kings xxv. 22-26 we have a summary account of the fortunes of the remnant in Palestine down to the murder of Gedaliah and the flight into Egypt. It is abridged from Jer. xxxix. 11—xliii. 7. In our passage, which is absent in the LXX, we have an enumeration of the captives taken away in three deportations. We do not know from what source this was added, and the passage presents difficulties; but in view of these difficulties and the lowness of the numbers, its statements seem to rest on excellent authority. But we should probably read 'seventeenth' for 'seventh,' since the figures do not agree with those given as to the exile in 597 (2 Kings xxiv. 15, 16: on 13, 14 see Skinner's Commentary, p. 430). The first deportation will in that case fall at the beginning

carried away captive: in the seventh year three thousand
Jews and three and twenty: in the eighteenth year of 29
Nebuchadrezzar he carried away captive from Jerusalem
eight hundred thirty and two persons: in the three and 30
twentieth year of Nebuchadrezzar Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons: all the persons were four thousand and six hundred.

[**E**] [a] And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth 31
year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, in the five and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the *first* year of his reign, lifted up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah,
and brought him forth out of prison; and he spake kindly 32
to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings
that were with him in Babylon. And he changed his 33

[a] See 2 Kings xxv. 27–30.

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of the war with Zedekiah, and embrace the Jews of the districts outside Jerusalem, captured while the siege of the capital was in progress. We must further assume either that the captives taken after the capture of Jerusalem in Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year are not included, which would be an unaccountable omission, or suppose that the author of this fragment followed a different reckoning, calling the eighteenth what is elsewhere called the nineteenth year; in which case the small number of the captives, eight hundred and thirty-two, taken from Jerusalem is very surprising. Of the third deportation we learn nothing from any other early source. It occurred some years after the destruction of Jerusalem. Several scholars combine the statement with that in Josephus (*Antiq.* X. ix. 7) that Nebuchadnezzar in the twenty-third year of his reign invaded Coele-Syria, then attacked the Ammonites and Moabites, and lastly Egypt from which he took to Babylon the Jews who were there. Some think that it was rather in connexion with the campaign against Moab and Ammon that he took away more of the Palestinian Jews.

31–34. Taken from 2 Kings xxv. 27–30.

31. five and twentieth. 2 Kings xxv. 27 has 'seven and twentieth.'

22 it was hollow. And a chapiter of brass was upon it; and
the height of the one chapiter was five cubits, with network
and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of
brass: and the second pillar also had like unto these,
23 and pomegranates. And there were ninety and six pome-
granates [a] on the sides; all the pomegranates were an
24 hundred upon the network round about. And the captain
of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah
the second priest, and the three keepers of the [b] door:
25 and out of the city he took an [c] officer that was set over
the men of war; and seven men of them that saw the
king's face, which were found in the city; and the scribe
of the captain of the host, who mustered the people of the
land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that
26 were found in the midst of the city. And Nebuzaradan
the captain of the guard took them, and brought them to
27 the king of Babylon to Riblah. And the king of Babylon
smote them, and put them to death at Riblah in the land
of Hamath. So Judah was carried away captive out of
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and brought him forth out of prison; and he spake kindly 32
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31–34. Taken from 2 Kings xxv. 27–30.

31. five and twentieth. 2 Kings xxv. 27 has 'seven and twentieth.'

prison garments, and did eat bread before him continually all the days of his life. And for his allowance, there was a continual allowance given him of the king of Babylon, every day a portion until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

INTRODUCTION

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I. POSITION IN CANON, AND TITLE.

THE English Bible follows the Septuagint and Vulgate in placing the Book of Lamentations immediately after the Prophecies of Jeremiah. This position, which is due to the belief expressed in the Introduction to the former version, that Jeremiah was the author, is not accorded to it in the Hebrew Canon. In this it is placed, not in the second collection, which embraces the Prophets along with the earlier Historical Books, but in the third collection known as The Writings. That the latter is its original position is probable, since the LXX translation was made by a different hand from that to which we owe the translation of Jeremiah. The book bears the title *Eykah* (i. e. How) in the Hebrew Bible, from the word with which it opens; but the Jews often spoke of it under the title *Qinoth* (i.e. Lamentations), and it bears an equivalent title in the LXX and Vulgate.

II. LITERARY FORM.

The first four of the poems are acrostics. The first, second, and fourth each contain twenty-two verses, and each verse is introduced by its appropriate letter, beginning with the first letter of the alphabet and closing with the last. In the first and second chapters each verse contains three lines, while in chapter iv each contains two lines. In chap. iii there are sixty-six verses, each containing one line; but each letter of the alphabet is thrice repeated in successive groups of three verses. The fifth poem contains twenty-two verses, but is not alphabetic in structure. It has been suggested by C. J. Ball that originally it conformed to the other poems in this respect, and he has made suggestions for the restoration of the original. But such reconstructions necessarily involve so much departure from the present text that at the best their character must be very uncertain. The choice of the acrostic form for poems of this character is not quite easy to understand, since the necessity of conforming to an artificial scheme hampers the freedom of expression and fetters the natural development of the thought. It is possible that originally the alphabetic structure was chosen because some magical efficacy was attached to it. But later it became one among other literary types, as in the present book. Other acrostics are to be found in Pss. xxv, xxxiv, xxxvii, cxi, cxiii, cxix, cxlv, Prov. xxxi. 10–31. In all probability Pss. ix and x originally formed an alphabetic poem, and traces of the alphabetic arrangement are also to be found in Nahum i. One curious feature is presented by our book. In Lam. i the acrostic adopts the usual order of the Hebrew alphabet, Pe following Ayin, but in Lam. ii—iv Pe precedes Ayin. This order, which perhaps is to be found elsewhere, has not yet been satisfactorily explained. Some scholars suppose that the same order was originally followed in Lam. i, but this is improbable (see note on i. 15).

The most noteworthy literary feature of the book is the metrical structure of the first four chapters. These are written in Qina rhythm, which we have already learned to recognize as Jeremiah's favourite metre. The credit for establishing the existence of this metre belongs to Budde, though Lowth and other scholars had to some extent anticipated his results. The name Qina, or lamentation, rhythm was given to it by Budde because he considered that it was the metre in which dirges over the dead were uttered, and thus came to be used for elegies over national misfortunes. This metre was, however, by no means exclusively employed for lamentations, so that the term Qina rhythm is retained rather as a convenient than a strictly accurate designation. The characteristic feature of this rhythm is that it consists of long lines divided into two unequal parts, the second part being shorter than the first. The metre depended on accent rather than on quantity or the number of syllables. In Qina rhythm the first half of the line seems normally to have contained three accented syllables, the second two syllables. Budde lays down the law for elegies in the following sentence: 'These were uniformly composed in verses of two members, the length of the first of which stands to that of the second in the proportion of 3 : 2, giving rise to a peculiar limping rhythm, in which the second member as it were dies away and expires' (Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iii, p. 5). Probably we ought to recognize that there was a greater freedom and irregularity in the execution than would be congenial to Western taste, so that while the recognition of Qina rhythm is valuable for purposes of Textual Criticism, some caution should be exercised in emending the text into too strict conformity with a rigid metrical scheme. For a fuller discussion of the questions of Hebrew metre in general the student may consult Cobb's *A Criticism of Systems of Hebrew Metre*, together with Budde's article in Hastings's *Dictionary* mentioned above and the relevant section in Cornill's Introduction to the Old Testament; and with special reference to *Lamentations*, the Introduction to Löhr's Commentary, where the metrical theory of Sievers is discussed. It may be added that Condamin, in a very suggestive article entitled 'Symmetrical Repetitions in *Lamentations* Chapters I and II', in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. vi (1906), has shown that in the first two chapters as a rule a word or expression which occurs in the first verse is repeated in the last verse, similarly in the second and last but one, in the third and last but two, and so on. This requires a little transposition in Lam. i, but that constitutes no serious objection. It is true that the repetitions are in several instances of very common expressions, but in other instances this is not so.

III. AUTHORSHIP AND DATE.

IN the English version the book is attributed to Jeremiah. In the LXX the title is simply 'Lamentations', i.e. no author's name is given in the LXX, which thus accords with the Hebrew. But it contains an introductory note which seems to rest upon the Hebrew original, and which is reproduced with some variation in the Vulgate. This note runs as follows: 'And it came to pass after Israel was carried away captive and Jerusalem was made desolate that Jeremiah sat weeping, and he lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and he said.' It has been held by some scholars that the author of Chronicles attributed the Lamentations to Jeremiah. In 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 we read in connexion with the death of Josiah: 'And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations, unto this day; and they made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.' The reference, however, can hardly be to our book. This contains only one verse, namely iv. 20, which could be interpreted as having reference to Josiah. Really it refers to Zedekiah, but the possibility of misinterpretation cannot be denied. It is, nevertheless, highly improbable. The chronicler is with good reason believed to have belonged to one of the temple choirs, and he could hardly have supposed that compositions sung in commemoration of the fall of Jerusalem could have had reference to the death of Josiah; and on the face of it the statement that the lamentations for that king are written in the Lamentations cannot refer to our book. We have accordingly no external evidence earlier than that of the LXX translation for the traditional view, and this is too late to bear any weight. It is possible, however, that the author of Lam. iii attributed one or more of the poems to Jeremiah.

We must accordingly rely on internal evidence alone for an answer to the problems of authorship and date.

The book itself puts forward no claim to authorship. At first sight the traditional view seems very plausible. Of course the popular view that Jeremiah was likely to have written the Lamentations because his temperament was such as to find congenial expression in such compositions, largely depends for its validity on an estimate of Jeremiah derived from the book itself, an estimate reflected in our word 'Jeremiad'. But this is to argue in a circle, and tacitly to assume the very point which needs to be proved. Still there are indications in Jeremiah's undoubted work of a temperament akin to that which finds utterance in our book (cf. Jer. ix. 1, xiii. 17, xiv. 17). Yet it is only a very imperfect parallel with the real Jeremiah that the author or authors of the Lamentations present to us. The sterner elements in his character can barely be discerned in our book, his capacity for moral indignation, his vehement denunciation, his clear-sighted certainty of approaching judgement, his conviction that no earthly power could bring political salvation to the apostate people.

Leaving aside the question as to the similarity of temperament, there is no doubt considerable affinity between our book and the Book of Jeremiah, alike in language and ideas. But this does not go beyond what would be natural in those who had been influenced by Jeremiah. Moreover, the points of contact are considerably diminished in importance when we remember how large is the non-Jeremianic element in the Book of Jeremiah itself.

Seeing then that the arguments in support of the Jeremianic authorship dwindle to a late tradition, whose origin is readily explained by the desire to father anonymous literature on some conspicuous personality, Jeremiah being the obvious if not the only possible candidate for such distinction, and to affinities in temperament, expression and ideas which cannot bear the weight of an argument for identity in authorship, we should be compelled, were there no arguments on the other side, to leave the question of Jeremiah's authorship in suspense. But there are cogent arguments which seem to exclude the traditional theory. In the first place, we may well inquire why, if Jeremiah was the author, his name was not mentioned in the Hebrew title of the book. And indeed we may inquire further why these poems were not included in our Book of Jeremiah. Their character would not make such an inclusion inappropriate, in view of the somewhat miscellaneous nature of the contents and the presence of much in it which is not the work of Jeremiah at all. Or, if for any reason it was desired to keep it distinct, why should it not have been appended in the Hebrew Canon to the Book of Jeremiah, as in the Septuagint and other versions?

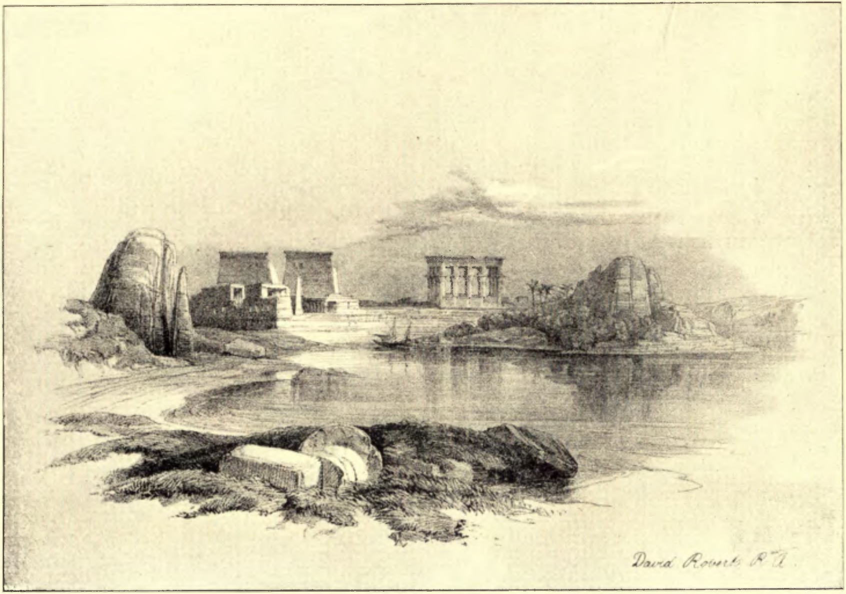
These general considerations are reinforced by those derived from a study of the book. While there is a general agreement in standpoint there is difference in detail. In iv. 17 the author includes himself with those who had expected help from Egypt, whereas Jeremiah emphatically declared that such a hope was entirely vain. In iv. 20 he speaks of Zedekiah in language very different from that which would have been used by Jeremiah. Nor can we reasonably suppose that Jeremiah could have said 'Her prophets find no vision from Yahweh'. Some of the other instances which have been alleged to prove the incompatibility of our book with the traditional authorship cannot be pressed. So far as the language and style of the book are concerned there are points of contact with Jeremiah, as mentioned above; there is also a marked difference, as was demonstrated at an earlier period by Naegelsbach and at a later time exhaustively proved by Löhr. On this it may suffice to quote the judgement of a great Hebraist who was singularly free from any love of novelty for its own sake. A. B. Davidson says: 'The whole style of these poems, though exquisitely beautiful and touching, and studded with the thoughts of the great prophet, is absolutely different to anything we find in the long roll of Jeremiah's great work. It is too artificial, too much studied, too elaborately worked out' (*Book by Book*,

p. 231). The case against Jeremiah's authorship is strengthened by the proof of dependence on Ezekiel and affinity with later writers. So far as this test goes we have to distinguish different groups within our book. Lam. ii and iv exhibit dependence on Ezekiel, Lam. i and v show points of contact with the Second Isaiah, and Lam. iii with Psalms of a late date. That Jeremiah should have borrowed from Ezekiel, even if he had known the younger prophet's writings, is very improbable, since we have no evidence of any such influence in his undoubted work. And the argument from literary parallelism, so far as it goes, favours a later date than that of Jeremiah for the composition of Lam. i, iii, and v.

This is corroborated by a consideration of the circumstances which are reflected in the poems. It is rather difficult in any case to find a suitable occasion in which Jeremiah could have composed the poems; but leaving this aside, the conditions which they seem to presuppose are in some instances apparently later than Jeremiah's time. The book closes with an appeal to Yahweh, which implies that the desolation of Judah has continued for a long time; and we could not reasonably regard this passage as written in Jeremiah's lifetime, quite apart from the inconsistency with Jeremiah's settled convictions as to the length of the exile which it involves. Moreover, the speaker is living apparently in Palestine a long time after the destruction of Jerusalem. We may say then that looking at the book as a whole the differences in diction constitute a very strong argument against the Jeremianic authorship, even if we could admit that he was in a position to write the poems and that he would have been likely to fetter the expression of his grief by an artificial alphabetic scheme. Looking at the poems in detail, the probable dependence on Ezekiel makes his authorship of Lam. ii and iv improbable, and it is also excluded by the inconsistencies with Jeremiah's standpoint already mentioned. Affinities with II Isaiah make this improbable for Lam. i and v, while the situation presupposed in the latter seems to fall outside the limits of Jeremiah's lifetime. Lam. iii appears to belong to the post-exilic period.

If then no part of the book is the work of Jeremiah, the question remains whether it is the work of more than one poet. Assuming that the variation in the alphabetic order which distinguishes Lam. i from Lam. ii and iv is original, it is not unlikely that it may be by a different author. Lam. ii and iv are commonly assigned to the same author on the ground of their literary affinity, their mutually complementary character, and the identical situation out of which they apparently spring. Lam. v is probably a good deal later than Lam. ii and iv, and deals with different conditions altogether, and is probably by another author. The absence of an alphabetic scheme favours the view that it was not written by the authors of Lam. i—iv. It is also probable, on account of its late date and the form which the acrostic takes, its literary quality and the character of its subject-matter, that the author of Lam. iii is responsible for none of the other poems. That the work of four different poets should be included in this book has really nothing strange about it. It is quite likely that many poets wrote elegies on the destruction of Jerusalem and the wretchedness of the people in the period which followed.

The date of the poems cannot be fixed within very close limits. Lam. ii and iv are probably the oldest. They were written, we may reasonably suppose, by one who had witnessed the horrors of Judah's last agony, since they bear all the marks of composition by an eye-witness. The dependence on Ezekiel suggests that they were written by an exile in Babylonia; their date need not be later than 580 B.C. Lam. v is considerably later, probably still within the exilic period but towards the close of it. Lam. i may perhaps belong to the same period. Lam. iii is much later. Löhr suggests 325 B.C. as an approximate date, while Budde assigns it to the third century in the pre-


David Roberts R.A.

Houses of the Gods of Egypt

Maccabean period (similarly Cheyne). It should be added that in two important articles, that in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* by Cheyne and that in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* by C. J. Ball, a post-exilic date has recently been assigned for the whole book. The main ground on which this conclusion rests is the literary relationship between our book and late exilic and post-exilic compositions. In detail, however, the two writers differ considerably, and while their studies are valuable for their collection of parallel passages these do not outweigh in the present writer's opinion the impression that Lam. ii and iv at least were written by an eye-witness, or the probability that Lam. v is earlier than the close of the exile. It may be added that J. A. Selbie in his admirable article in Hastings's Dictionary also considers a post-exilic date plausible.

IV. SELECTED LITERATURE.

Of the older literature it may suffice to mention the Commentary by Calvin, of later Commentaries those by Thenius, Neumann, Ewald, Gerlach, Naegelsbach, Payne Smith, Streane (Cambridge Bible), Cheyne (Pulpit Commentary), Oettli, Budde, and Löhr. Adeney contributes the volume on *Canticles and Lamentations* to the Expositor's Bible. Greenup has published a Commentary on Lam. i, and also a translation of the Targum on the Book of Lamentations. The articles in the Dictionaries of the Bible and Encyclopaedias may be consulted, together with the Introductions to the Old Testament mentioned in the literature on Jeremiah. The articles by Löhr in Stade's *Zeitschrift* are of special value.

NOTE.—It has not seemed necessary to add any symbols indicative of authorship, or to prefix analyses of the poems to the notes, in view of the absence of any systematic development of the themes dealt with in the different poems.

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people ! 1
How is she become as a widow !

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i. 1–22. THE FIRST ELEGY.

The first elegy falls into two main divisions : (a) 1–11, (b) 12–22. In the former the poet is the speaker, in the latter Jerusalem. The city, however, is introduced as the speaker in the closing lines of 9 and 11 ; while in 17 the prophet interrupts her utterance, referring to the city in the third person. The theme receives no strict development, the author returns again and again to the same thought, and the poem is characterized by a certain poverty in vocabulary. In spite of some fine verses it falls below the second and fourth elegies in poetic value, and it is conventional in form and expression. It seems to have been written in Palestine ; its date may be towards the close of the exile. Löhr singles out as specially characteristic of its theological standpoint, the emphasis on sin, not simply the rebellions of earlier generations but of the writer's own time, and the desire for revenge.

An excellent translation is given by Cheyne in the Introduction to *The Book of Psalms* in the *Parchment Library.*

i. 1, 2. As a parallel to this very fine passage Cheyne aptly quotes the splendid opening of Swinburne's *Mater Dolorosa.*

1. The verse, as is usual, falls into three lines :

'How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people !
She is become as a widow, that was great among the nations,
Princess among the provinces, she is become tributary ! '

How. The second and fourth elegies open in the same way, and similarly Isaiah's lament on the corruption of Jerusalem (Isa. i. 21), a passage which may have been in the writer's mind ; cf. also Jer. ix. 18, xlviii. 17; Zeph. ii. 15; Ezek. xxvi. 17; Isa. xiv. 4, 12 ; 2 Sam. i. 25. The exclamation was apparently commonly used as an introduction to dirges over the dead.

sit solitary. The city once thronged with people, now sits all deserted, as Isaiah had described her approaching fate in the pathetic imagery of Isa. iii. 26.

as a widow. The widowhood of Zion is spoken of in Isa. liv. 4, and the same prophet replies to Babylon's arrogant boast,

She that was great among the nations, *and* princess among the provinces,
How is she become tributary!
2 She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks;

'I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children,' with the announcement that 'the loss of children and widowhood' shall befall her in one day (Isa. xlvii. 8, 9). The poet does not, however, call Zion a widow, nor does he mean to suggest that she is bereaved of Yahweh her husband (Isa. liv. 5). She is compared to a widow; it is her forlorn and defenceless condition, exposed to insult and oppression, her penury and loneliness, which the metaphor calls up before us.

princess among the provinces. This is probably better than Budde's rendering, 'princess over the provinces,' since it matches 'great among the nations.' The term 'provinces' is used in 1 Kings xx. 14–19 in the phrase 'the young men of the princes of the provinces,' where it seems to mean the various districts into which the kingdom was divided. Apart from this passage it is found only in the later literature, with reference generally to the Persian satrapies. Its meaning here is not quite clear. Löhr suggests, with a reference to the Targums, that it may mean 'city,' which would be more appropritae.

tributary: better **a bond-servant.** See Judges i. 30, where the R.V. marg. gives 'subject to taskwork.'

2. The city which in 1 was simply compared to a widow, is now represented as a woman. Zion weeps bitterly for her desperate state, as Rachel, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, for her exiled children (Jer. xxxi. 15). But while Rachel refused to be comforted, those who should have consoled Zion had treacherously deserted her. These were her 'lovers' (cf. 19) and 'friends,' i. e. the nations which were in alliance with her, especially the other Palestinian peoples (cf. Jer. xxvii. 3), and Egypt (iv. 17, Jer. xxxvii. 5 ff.). For the exultation of Edom over the downfall of Jerusalem see note on iv. 21, 22; for the hostility of Ammon Jer. xl. 14, Ezek. xxv. 3–7.

in the night: cf. Ps. xxx. 5. The point is not that her sorrow is so great that she weeps not by day only but even in the night which should be dedicated to rest. The night is rather the season when pain is most acutely felt and the hours seem interminable. And similarly the sense of bereavement and ruin is more overwhelming when the sunshine has passed away and the stir of the day has given place to the stillness of the night. There is nothing to blunt the edge of sorrow or divert attention from it; withdrawn

Among all her lovers she hath none to comfort her:
All her friends have dealt treacherously with her,
They are become her enemies.
Judah is gone into [a] captivity because of affliction, and 3
because of great servitude;
She dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest:
All her persecutors overtook her within the straits.
The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the 4
[b] solemn assembly;

---

[a] †Or, *exile* [b] †Or, *appointed feast*

from all companionship, shut in alone with her grief, Zion the desolate relieves her emotion in passionate tears.

All her friends . . . enemies. This should be printed as one line; the division is correctly indicated, the second part of the line begins with 'They.'

3. From the city the poet turns to the people. The Hebrew is ambiguous; the preposition rendered 'because of' means 'from,' and it may be used here in a local or a causal sense. If the former, the meaning is that Judah has gone into captivity in Babylonia away from the affliction and servitude she suffered in her own land, and this is supported by the fact that the verb rendered 'is gone into captivity' all but invariably bears this sense. But it is unlikely that the poet would wish to leave the impression that captivity was an amelioration of the people's lot, and even if it were actually so it would be contrary to his purpose to lighten his picture by such a touch. We should accordingly abide by the R.V. rendering, substituting the margin 'exile' for 'captivity,' and take the reference to be to voluntary exile on the part of those who were left behind in Judah, but found the Babylonian yoke too intolerable and left Judah to escape it; cf. Jer. xl. 11, xlii, xliii. The verb is used in a similar sense in Ezek. xii. 3. But even among the peoples that were free from Babylon she found no settled home, and her weakness exposed her to oppression, her persecutors took advantage of the straits into which she was driven.

servitude. From Isa. xiv. 3 we learn that the Jews in Babylonia had to render forced labour to their rulers, and apparently this was so with those who were permitted to remain in Palestine.

among the heathen: in an unclean land, among those who had no respect for her religion and regarded Yahweh as a God too weak to save His people and His sanctuary from Babylon.

4. The ways which lead to Zion, once crowded with those who came up to the feasts, now mourn because they are deserted;

All her gates are desolate, her priests do sigh:
Her virgins are afflicted, and she herself is in bitterness.
5 Her adversaries are become the head, her enemies prosper;
For the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions:
Her young children are gone into captivity before the adversary.
6 And from the daughter of Zion all her [a] majesty is departed:

---

[a] Or, *beauty*

---

the priests sigh, for their occupation and livelihood have disappeared; the virgins who had their appointed part in the cultus (Judges xxi. 21, Ps. lxviii. 25, Jer. xxxi. 13) are afflicted; while Zion herself broods in bitterness. The passage has a historical importance, since it does not favour the view that throughout the exile the cultus was continued on the Temple site, though it may have done so for some time after the destruction of the city (see note on Jer. xli. 5).

5. the head. There is perhaps a reference to Deut. xxviii. 13, 44.

her transgressions. The thought that Zion's calamities were due to her sin recurs in 8, 18, 20, 22; but the writer does not indicate more precisely of what sins she had been guilty.

Her young children . . . adversary. The reference may be to the deportation of the Jews by the Babylonians, the young children being singled out because the privations and fatigue of the march would press on them with special severity. But the author wrote apparently in the latter part of the exile, and the burden of his lamentation is the sad condition of city and people at the time, rather than the horrors of the siege and the miseries of the deportation, though the latter are of course mentioned. It is possible that the reference may be rather to the fact that parents were driven by poverty to sell their children into slavery.

6. her majesty: her wealth and splendour; so that even the princes had become faint from famine in the siege, and in this exhausted condition are driven by the foe into exile. The specific allusion in the third line is sometimes taken to be to the flight of Zedekiah and the men of war from Jerusalem, when the Babylonians entered it. But in view of the fact that this poem was probably not written by an eye-witness of the fall of Jerusalem, it is more likely that the line has a more general reference, though it might be urged that, according to Jer. lii. 10, 'all the princes of

Her princes are become like harts that find no pasture,
And they are gone without strength before the pursuer.
Jerusalem remembereth in the days of her affliction and 7
of her [a] miseries
All her pleasant things that were from the days of old:
When her people fell into the hand of the adversary,
and none did help her,
The adversaries saw her, they did mock at her [b] desolations.

---

[a] †Or, *wanderings* [b] Heb. *ceasings.*

Judah' were put to death by Nebuchadnezzar in Riblah, and therefore were not taken to Babylon.

like harts. The LXX and Vulg. took the word to mean 'like rams;' the difference is only one of pointing, and many modern commentators accept this. Budde's objection that rams are not hunted is forcible, but 'the pursuer' need not be so narrowly interpreted, while 'rams' is more suitable than 'harts' as a designation of princes, and the word is in fact constantly used in this or a similar sense.

7. The verse is too long. It ought to contain three lines, but it has four. The irregularity is less obvious to the English reader, since the R.V. has printed 1 and 2 in four lines, though they are really three-lined verses (see notes). Probably the second line should be deleted as a marginal gloss which has been mistakenly inserted, and we should render in the text, 'Jerusalem remembereth the days of her affliction and wanderings. When her people fell,' &c. The origin of the gloss is obscure; it may have been attached to 'her majesty' in 6, or it may have been intended to bring out the bitterness of her fate by contrast with her former glory. When the gloss is removed, the first line has still an abnormal verse-division; but we ought probably to recognize that the order of the two parts of the line was occasionally inverted, the shorter being placed first. Budde secures regularity by striking out the rare word rendered 'and of her miseries,' as perhaps a repetition of the very similar word rendered 'of her pleasant things;' though it might be due to the influence of iii. 19, 'Remember mine affliction and my misery.'

miseries. The word occurs besides only in iii. 19 and Isa. lviii. 7. Its sense is uncertain; probably it means 'restlessness,' 'wandering.'

desolations. The word occurs here only. The A.V. rendering 'sabbaths,' which follows the Vulgate, is rightly set aside by the

8 Jerusalem hath grievously sinned; therefore she [a] is become as an unclean thing:
All that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness:
Yea, she sigheth, and turneth backward.
9 Her filthiness was in her skirts; she remembered not her latter end;
Therefore is she come down wonderfully; she hath no comforter:
Behold, O LORD, my affliction; for the enemy hath magnified himself.
10 The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things:

[a] Or, *is removed*

R.V., which gives the general sense; 'downfall' would perhaps be beter.

8. With a realism, uncongenial to our Western taste, the poet describes in this verse and the following the pitiful humiliation of Jerusalem, and the scorn which its exposure has brought upon her, among those who had formerly honoured her.

9. According to the present text the first two lines are metrically irregular. Budde makes the ingenious suggestion that two words should be transposed from 8 and inserted after 'skirts,' and that 'she hath no comforter,' which occurs several times in the poem, should be struck out as an insertion designed to fill a gap. The lines would then run,

'Her filthiness was in her skirts, she is become as an unclean thing:
She remembered not her latter end, therefore is she come down wonderfully.'

This yields a text more satisfactory both in metre and sense; for the want of connexion between the two halves of the first line in the present text is very noticeable. For 'she remembered not her latter end' cf. Isa. xlvii. 7.

As in 11, the last line is an appeal by the city to Yahweh; which prepares for the transition to direct speech in 12.

10. The enemy has greedily seized all Zion's 'pleasant things,' the special reference in this context being to the Temple treasures. The sense of the Temple's sanctity was deeply outraged by the intrusion of the heathen into it. The feeling was probably inten-

For she hath seen that the heathen are entered into her
sanctuary,
Concerning whom thou didst command that they should
not enter into thy congregation.
All her people sigh, they seek bread; 11
They have given their pleasant things for meat to refresh
the soul:
See, O LORD, and behold; for I am become vile.
Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? 12

---

sified in the later period, the profanation by Antiochus Epiphanes, the entrance of Pompey into the Holy of Holies, being resented with the utmost horror and bitterness. In Pss. lxxiv and lxxix we perhaps have reflected the emotion stirred by an earlier profanation in the Persian period, to which some would also refer Isa. lxiii. 7—lxiv. 12. In the first century of our era there was a Greek inscription warning Gentiles, on penalty of death, not to pass beyond the barrier which marked the limits of the court of the Gentiles. This inscription has been discovered in recent times. The third line, with its reference to Deut. xxiii. 3, though in a generalized form (cf. Ezek. xliv. 9), brings out that it is a Divine, not merely a human prohibition, which the heathen have transgressed. Löhr suspects that this line was originally a marginal gloss which has taken the place of the original third line. But if a marginal gloss was inserted in the text, we should have expected the verse to consist of four lines, as is the case with 7, rather than that a line should be struck out to make room for it. Bickell, followed by Cheyne, reads in the first line 'Zion spreadeth forth her hands, because of her pleasant things,' the gesture in that case expressing distress.

11. Oettli is probably right in thinking that the special reference in this verse is to the conditions after the fall of Jerusalem. Such valuables as they had been able to save from the disaster they had been compelled to part with to buy bread. So in v. 4 the complaint is made that they have to purchase the water and the wood which once they had owned.

meat: literally 'bread,' i. e. food.

12. The second half of the poem begins at this point. Zion is now the speaker, except in 17.

The text of the first line is probably corrupt. The rendering in E.V. is very dubious; the Hebrew is literally 'Not to you, all ye that pass by.' The LXX apparently took the negative *lo'* as the particle *lu'*, 'would that,' though it is possible that the transla-

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my
sorrow, which is done unto me,
[a] Wherewith the LORD hath afflicted *me* in the day of
his fierce anger.
13 From on high hath he sent fire into my bones, and it
prevaileth against them:
He hath spread a net for my feet, he hath turned me
back;

[a] Or, *Whom the* LORD *hath afflicted*

---

tor read *ōy*, 'alas.' The verse must have begun with *Lamed*, but this letter is written small in the Hebrew text, which also may point to textual corruption. Several suggestions have been made for the restoration of the text, but none inspires any great confidence. Budde reads 'Oh, all ye that pass by, look on me and see;' Lōhr 'Therefore, all ye that pass by, look and see.'

all ye that pass by. The traveller, as he pauses before the ruins of Zion, is asked whether in all his wanderings he has seen a sight so pathetic, a grief so bitter, so absorbing; all the more bitter that it is her own God who has smitten her in His hot anger.

13. Yahweh has sent from heaven a fire into Zion's bones; the reference is not, of course, to the fortresses, as the hard bony parts of the structure; the metaphor implies that the Divine judgement has entered like a flame her inmost being, a fever whose racking pains ended in death. The figure is borrowed apparently from Jer. xx. 9: cf. Ps. cii. 3, Job xxx. 30.

it prevaileth against them. The word is not very appropriate; the verb may bear the same sense as the cognate form in Aramaic, to chastise. We might adopt this, and with a slight change read 'and chastened me.' The Vulgate read the Hebrew in this way.

spread a net for my feet. The metaphor is not uncommon in the Psalms to describe the plots devised by the writer's enemies for their ruin. The Psalmists do not represent God as spreading a net for the feet. In Ezek. xii. 13 (cf. xvii. 20) Yahweh says with reference to Zedekiah, 'My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare;' similarly in Hos. vii. 12, 'When they shall go, I will spread my net upon them:' cf. Jer. l. 24. The most striking development of the metaphor is in Bildad's graphic description of the snares and terrors which beset the wicked on every side (Job xviii. 8-11).

he hath turned me back. We should rather have expected the line to be completed by some such clause as, 'and taken me

He hath made me desolate and faint all the day.
The yoke of my transgressions is bound by his hand; 14
They are knit together, they are come up upon my neck;
he hath made my strength to [a] fail:
The Lord hath delivered me into their hands, [b] against
whom I am not able to stand.

[a] Heb. *stumble.* [b] Or, *from whom I am not able to rise up*

---

in its toils.' If the poet intended to continue the metaphor of the net, he has not done so in a very felicitous way: snares are set to entrap, not to turn back; for the latter the figure of a barrier would have been more appropriate. The two parts of the verse should presumably be regarded as mutually independent.

14. This is a very difficult verse. The verb rendered 'is bound' occurs nowhere else, and its existence is dubious. The substitution of another consonant (*ne'ĕqad* for *nisqad*, so Cheyne) would give the sense 'is bound;' the verb occurs in Gen. xxii. 9 only. Or we might read *niqshar* (so Ball). Written with a *Shin* instead of a *Sin* (the difference being one simply of a diacritical point), the verb means 'to watch.' Since the word rendered 'yoke' may be so pointed as to mean 'upon,' the LXX naturally took the Hebrew to mean 'Watch is kept over my transgressions.' We should then have to suppose either that the word rendered 'by his hand' is to be regarded as a fragment of the second part of the line, or connect it with the following word, rendering 'by his hand are they twisted together.' The second line will then consist of 'they are come up . . . fail.' Since this is unduly short, Budde proposes to insert the word for 'yoke' (reading *'ālu 'ōl 'al*), which is all the easier that the two consonants of which it is composed already occur twice, and then continues in the next clause with a plural verb. 'They have come up as a yoke upon my neck; they have made my strength to fail.' This restoration of the first two lines does not give the most satisfactory sense, but it is perhaps the nearest approximation to the original that has so far been proposed. The meaning will be that Yahweh watches over Zion's transgressions, twining them together into a rope of many strands, which is laid like a yoke on her neck, and has exhausted her strength.

The third line gives a good sense, but the Hebrew would run more smoothly if, with Budde, we read 'their hand' instead of 'the hands of,' rendering 'Yahweh hath delivered me into their hand, I am not able to rise up.'

15 The Lord hath set at nought all my mighty men in the
midst of me;
He hath called a solemn assembly against me to crush
my young men:
The Lord hath trodden as in a winepress the virgin
daughter of Judah.
16 For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth
down with water;
Because the comforter that should refresh my soul is
far from me:
My children are desolate, because the enemy hath prevailed.

---

15. The heroes of Zion are powerless against the might of Babylon; the foe assembles against her warriors as if to celebrate a sacrificial banquet (cf. Zeph. i. 7, 8, Jer. xlvi. 10, Ezek. xxxix. 17–20, Isa. xxxiv. 6) to which the ruddy wine will not be wanting, for Yahweh has trodden human grapes in His winepress, the wine is the blood of Judah. The metaphor of the last line is powerfully worked out in the brilliant, if morally repulsive, description of Yahweh's return from His triumph over Edom in Isa. lxiii. 1–6: cf. Joel iii. 13, and the imitative passages Rev. xiv. 18–20, xix. 15.

virgin daughter of Judah: not Judah's virgin daughter, but Judah conceived as a young virgin, the genitive being one of apposition. The designation is based on Isaiah's 'virgin daughter of Zion.' But it is not equivalent to it; Zion is the speaker, but she refers to Judah in the third person, and means the population of the whole kingdom. Bickell identifies the two, and supposes that here the poet speaks in his own person and refers to Zion in the third person. Since he does this in 17, Bickell infers that 16 and 17 should be transposed, so that this line should stand in immediate connexion with 17. This would secure the same order of the alphabet as in ii–iv, according to which Pe precedes Ayin. But this is to be rejected not only because Zion and Judah are not to be identified, but because it would spoil the present symmetrical division of Zion's speech into two equal halves, 12–16 and 18–22.

16. On metrical grounds the repetition of 'mine eye' must be regarded as a mistake, due to dittography. The second and third lines consist mainly of echoes of earlier verses.

these things: i.e. those enumerated in 13–15.

Zion spreadeth forth her hands; there is none to comfort her; 17
The LORD hath commanded concerning Jacob, that they that are round about him should be his adversaries:
Jerusalem is among them as an unclean thing.
The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment: 18
Hear, I pray you, all ye peoples, and behold my sorrow:
My virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.
I called for my lovers, *but* they deceived me: 19

---

17. The poet speaks in his own person. This verse also has points of contact with earlier parts of the poem. Zion spreads out her hands in entreaty to a pitiless world; Yahweh has decreed that Jacob's neighbours should be his foes; they look on Jerusalem with loathing, as a man would shrink from the ceremonially unclean. In the later period the name Jacob (ii. 2, 3) was used for the nation with greater frequency and without the sinister suggestions of trickiness and self-seeking that once attached to it. For the hostility of the surrounding peoples see note on 2 and Jer. xii. 7-17 (with the notes).

18. Zion resumes her utterance with a confession that Yahweh is righteous in thus afflicting her; it is the due punishment for her rebellion: cf. 5, 8, 14, 20, 22. She turns to the nations, as before to the wayfarer (12), appealing to their compassion in spite of their former lack of sympathy; she cannot believe that they would withhold their pity if they but considered the bitterness of her bereavement.

My virgins and my young men. This order is found only here and in ii. 21, Amos viii. 13.

are gone into captivity. The reference is probably to the deportation to Babylon, though possibly to the selling of youths and maidens into foreign slavery: see note on 5.

19. the poet touches again (cf. 2, 8) the faithlessness of Judah's allies; when her crisis came they betrayed her trust. Then he passes on to the religious and secular leaders of the people, who perished of hunger, while vainly seeking food to bring back their exhausted vitality. At the end of the verse the LXX adds 'and found it not.' Metrical considerations forbid its addition, unless something is removed to take its place. Dyserinck and Budde substitute it for 'to refresh their souls.' It is true that this expression occurs in 11, 16, but this poem is marked by numerous

My priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the
 city,
While they sought them meat to refresh their souls.
20 Behold, O LORD; for I am in distress; my bowels are
 troubled;
Mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously
 rebelled:
Abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is as death.
21 They have heard that I sigh; there is none to comfort
 me;
All mine enemies have heard of my trouble; they are
 glad that thou hast done it:
Thou wilt bring the day that thou hast proclaimed, and
 they shall be like unto me.

---

repetitions, and that their search was unsuccessful is sufficiently indicated by the previous line. Ball reads 'For they sought food to restore life, and found it not.'

20. From the description of her calamities Zion turns to Yahweh in prayer, though the prayer itself contains fresh mention of her troubles. Ball reads 'my inwards burn' instead of 'For I have grievously rebelled,' which is more suitable to the context. The third line presents some difficulty. The general sense is clear: the sword bereaves outside the city; death, i. e. the pestilence (see note on Jer. xv. 2), rages within. But 'there is as death' is strange. The omission of a single consonant gives the reading 'at home there is death,' which is quite satisfactory except that it is not quite easy to account for the origin of the present text. It is accepted by several scholars, and is probably the best way out of the difficulty.

21. The text is in some disorder. At the beginning we should probably read, with the omission of one consonant, 'Hear how I sigh,' the words being addressed to Yahweh as at the beginning of 20. The text has been assimilated to the second line. The second and third lines as at present arranged are metrically irregular. We can best overcome the difficulty by transposing (with Löhr) the latter part of the second line and the former part of the third,

'All mine enemies have heard of my trouble, thou hast brought
 the day that thou didst proclaim;
They are glad that thou hast done it, let them be like unto me.'

The 'day' is that of Zion's downfall foretold by the prophets.

Let all their wickedness come before thee; 22
And do unto them, as thou hast done unto me for all
my transgressions:
For my sighs are many, and my heart is faint.

How hath the Lord covered the daughter of Zion with 2
a cloud in his anger!
He hath cast down from heaven unto the earth the
beauty of Israel,

---

22. The prayer for vengeance on her exulting foes is more fully developed in this verse and supported by a moral motive. The spirit is one of retaliation, but it is given a more decorous expression by the plea that they also are guilty of wickedness, which merits an equal punishment with the rebellion of Zion. Ball reads at the beginning of the verse 'Let the time of their calamity come.'

ii. 1–22. THE SECOND ELEGY.

This poem is of higher poetical value than the first elegy; it is written with a much more vivid sense of the catastrophe, apparently by one who had lived through it and seen with his own eyes the pitiful scenes and the horrors he describes. It is less made up of generalities, and deals far more with concrete realities. Its affinities with Ezekiel suggest a date a few years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and favour the view that the author was himself an exile.

For a spirited rendering of Lam. ii and iv see G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, vol. ii.

ii. 1. How: see note on i. 1.

covered . . . with a cloud. This is probably the correct rendering of the verb, which occurs nowhere else in the O. T. The dense cloud which covers Zion is a symbol of the gloom which has settled upon her, and the shrouding of her glory from the gaze of the world. Cheyne reads 'put to shame.'

daughter of Zion: see note on i. 15. It occurs six times in this poem; 'daughter of Judah' twice; 'daughter of Jerusalem' twice.

the beauty of Israel. This may be an expression for the glory of Israel, its exalted position; or it may designate some concrete object, either the Temple (Isa. lxiv. 11) or Jerusalem. Exalted to heaven, it had been thrust down from that proud pre-eminence. Yet thrust down to earth, not to Sheol; its ruin is not irretrievable.

And hath not remembered his footstool in the day of
his anger.
2 The Lord hath swallowed up all the habitations of
Jacob, and hath not pitied;
He hath thrown down in his wrath the strong holds of
the daughter of Judah;
He hath brought them down to the ground:
He hath profaned the kingdom and the princes thereof.
3 He hath cut off in fierce anger [a] all the horn of Israel;

---

[a] Or, *every horn*

---

his footstool. Obviously this cannot be, as in Isa. lxvi. 1, the whole earth, but either the ark as in 1 Chron. xxviii. 2, or the Temple as Ezek. xliii. 7 and probably Ps. xcix. 5, cxxxii. 7. The latter is much the more likely, especially as it is questionable if the ark was in existence when Jerusalem was captured.

2. There is a metrical irregularity, which is relieved, if not completely removed, by Löhr's rearrangement of the second and third lines,

'He hath thrown down, brought down to the ground the strong
holds of the daughters of Judah;
He hath profaned in his wrath the king and the princes thereof.'

The change of 'kingdom' into 'king,' accepted also by Bickell, is not for metrical reasons, but follows the LXX, Syriac, and Arabic; cf. 9, and Isa. xliii. 28 (R.V. margin), 'will profane the holy princes.' The verse describes first the unsparing devastation of the homesteads and pastures in the country districts (this being the special sense borne by 'habitations'), then the overthrow of the fortresses, and finally the desecration of king and princes. The divinity that 'doth hedge a king,' which made an outrage on 'the Lord's anointed' something of a sacrilege to antique thought, was rudely stripped away, and the secondary sanctity, which was communicated to princes of the blood (cf. Isa. xliii. 28 as above), naturally disappeared with the primary. On the origin of this conception in primitive superstition, Dr. Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, Part I, 'The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings' (1911), may be consulted with advantage.

3. The horn is often in the O.T. the symbol of strength: the meaning is that all the might of Israel has been cut off. The right hand which formerly Yahweh had stretched out in defence of His people, He has drawn back, leaving them dependent on themselves alone in presence of the enemy. Thus having in His wrath

He hath drawn back his right hand from before the enemy:
And he hath burned up Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about.
He hath bent his bow like an enemy, he hath stood with his right hand as an adversary, 4
And hath slain all that were pleasant to the eye:
[a] In the tent of the daughter of Zion he hath poured out his fury like fire.
The Lord is become as an enemy, he hath swallowed up Israel; 5
He hath swallowed up all her palaces, he hath destroyed his strong holds:
And he hath multiplied in the daughter of Judah mourning and lamentation.
And he hath violently taken away his [b]tabernacle, as if it were of a garden; 6

[a] Or, *On*   Or, *booth* Or, *hedge*

---

cut off their strength, and then withdrawn His own protection, they are at the mercy of the foe. Not content with depriving them of all power of defence, He has taken the offensive against them, and burned Jacob as with a devouring fire.

4. This verse also is only imperfectly preserved. The second half of the first line is too long; Löhr is probably right in thinking that 'with his right hand' has been mistakenly inserted from 3. The second line has been wrongly printed in R.V. It should run:

> 'And hath slain all that were pleasant to the eye   in the tent of the daughter of Zion.'

The third line is unfortunately incomplete, the second half having been lost. Yahweh is in this verse represented as an archer (cf. the powerful description in Job xvi. 13) ranging Himself against His people and slaying the youths and maidens of Zion. Another restoration (by Cheyne) may be seen in *Enc. Bib.* 2698.

5. mourning and lamentation. Streane reproduces the assonance in the Hebrew by rendering 'groaning and moaning;' Cheyne renders 'moaning and bemoaning.'

6. This verse is difficult. The first line in the Hebrew is repre-

He hath destroyed his place of assembly:

---

sented by two lines in the R.V. The reference to 'a garden' is barely intelligible. The rendering 'as if it were of a garden' suggests that the tabernacle of Yahweh has been removed with as little compunction as if it were a temporary booth in a garden. But the Hebrew is more naturally rendered 'as a garden,' and this yields no satisfactory sense. The LXX reads 'as a vine,' but this is no better. Since both words begin with the same consonant, Löhr may be right in thinking that the Hebrew and the LXX are expansions of the same abbreviation. De Hoop Scheffer reads, with the addition of a single consonant, 'as a thief' (*gannāb* for *gan*), and this has been accepted by Dyserinck and Budde. In that case we should adopt the margin 'hedge' for 'tabernacle,' and explain that Yahweh has broken down the hedge round Zion as ruthlessly as a thief would break down a fence which protected property he desired to rob. If this was the original text it was perhaps intentionally altered, both in the Hebrew and the LXX, because the comparison seemed offensive. It is better than the Heb. and LXX, but it leaves something to be desired in lucidity, and the context favours the rendering 'tabernacle' rather than 'hedge,' since it is with the Temple that the poet is now concerned. Accordingly we must resign ourselves to recognizing that the text is corrupt. The general sense is fortunately clear. Cheyne gives a suggested restoration of 6–8 in *Enc. Bib.* 2698.

place of assembly. This sense is required by the context. The word is the same as that rendered 'solemn assembly' in the next line, and though the meaning 'place of assembly' is attested by Ps. lxxiv. 8, it is suspicious that the word should be used in two senses in successive lines. Budde thinks that the original text may have read 'his vineyard' (*karmō*), which was perhaps intentionally altered by the same hand to which we owe 'as a garden.'

But 'his vineyard' would surely have seemed quite unobjectionable to him; it would suit the present text quite as well as that which De Hoop Scheffer substitutes. If, as is probable, neither is correct, we may dismiss the emendation 'his vineyard.' The context requires a designation of the Temple. The present writer is inclined to think that 'his sanctuary' (*miqdāshō* instead of *mo'ădō*) should be read. The corruption was facilitated by the fact that the next word (*shikkah*) began with *sh*, and by the occurrence of *mo'ēd* in the next line. It is true that this word recurs in 7, but so also does *mo'ed*, i.e. three times in two verses, and the use of the same word in the same sense in consecutive verses is less objectionable than the use of the same word in different senses in consecutive lines.

The LORD hath caused [a] solemn assembly and sabbath
to be forgotten in Zion,
And hath despised in the indignation of his anger the
king and the priest.
The Lord hath cast off his altar, he hath abhorred his 7
sanctuary,
He hath given up into the hand of the enemy the walls
of her palaces:

---

[a] †Or, *appointed feast*

---

the king and the priest. The king is mentioned here, as the context requires and the coupling with the priest suggests, in virtue of his official relation to the cultus.

7. The second line is difficult and probably corrupt. This verse, like the preceding, is occupied with the Temple; a reference to palaces is out of place. If the term is taken to mean certain parts of the Temple, such a meaning occurs nowhere else, and since 'sanctuary' is a masculine noun, the feminine 'her palaces is hard to account for. Elsewhere the expression 'to give up into the hand of' has persons, not things, for its object. Several scholars hold that the text needs to be altered. Dyserinck thinks some such word as 'his dwelling' should be substituted for 'her palaces.' Budde suggests very cleverly that we should emend it into 'his ark of the covenant' (*'ărōn b^{e}rīthō* for *'arm^{e}nōtheyhā*), and strike out 'the walls of' as a mistaken insertion from the next verse. This suggestion, like the preceding, is open to the objection that we should expect the object to be persons, not things. Even if we waive this, as in this context we well may, it remains questionable if a mention of the ark is to be expected here (see notes on 1). Cheyne reads for 'the walls of her palaces,' 'all her precious things;' similarly in 8 'to destroy the precious things of Zion.' Löhr simply leaves a blank in his translation.

The poet compares the noise made in the Temple by the Babylonian soldiers to that made on 'the day of a solemn assembly,' an allusion, all the more significant that it is quite incidental, to the orgiastic character of the cultus in the pre-exilic period. It is also clear that the poet was himself familiar with the Temple-worship before the destruction of Jerusalem, a fact which corroborates what we should otherwise infer from the poem, that he was an eyewitness of its siege and fall. The description may be illustrated from Ps. lxxiv. 3-7, even though this probably refers to a later calamity, especially from verse 4, 'Thine adversaries have roared in the midst of thine assembly.'

They have made a noise in the house of the LORD, as
in the day of a solemn assembly
8 The LORD hath purposed to destroy tne wall of the
daughter of Zion;
He hath stretched out the line, he hath not withdrawn
his hand from [a] destroying:
But he hath made the rampart and wall to lament;
they languish together.
9 Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed
and broken her bars:
Her king and her princes are among the nations where
the law is not;

---

[a] Heb. *swallowing up*.

---

8. The poet passes on from the Temple to the walls and gates of the city and its most prominent inhabitants. The walls and gates are specially mentioned, because while they remained intact the city kept its foes at bay, and when the city was captured they were broken down (2 Kings xxv. 10 = Jer. lii. 14) as a precaution against future rebellion (cf. Ezra iv. 12–16). Although Jerusalem was reduced to the extremities of famine (12, 19, 20, iv. 3, 4, 9, 10, 2 Kings xxv. 3 = Jer. lii. 6), the city was not actually starved into surrender, but 'a breach was made in the city' (2 Kings xxv. 4 = Jer. lii. 7).

stretched out the line. This metaphor is employed elsewhere not only for building or restoration (Zech. i. 16) but for pulling down as here: cf. Amos vii. 7–9; 2 Kings xxi. 13, 'And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab;' Isa. xxxiv. 11, 'he shall stretch over it the line of confusion and the plummet of emptiness.' The work of destruction will be carefully planned and thoroughly executed.

not withdrawn his hand. God's hand was withdrawn from the defence of His people (3); it is stretched out to destroy the city.

For the vivid personification in the third line cf. i. 4, Jer. xiv. 2.

9. In the first line, 'destroyed' and 'broken' are variants, one of which must be deleted on metrical grounds. The latter is used in Amos i. 5, Jer. li. 30, and may be either retained or struck out on that ground. Bickell and Budde strike it out, but read 'her bars are destroyed,' so that Yahweh ceases to be the subject, as in the rest of the verse.

where the law is not. If this rendering is correct, the mean-

Yea, her prophets find no vision from the LORD.
The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, 10
they keep silence;
They have cast up dust upon their heads; they have
girded themselves with sackcloth:
The virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the
ground.
Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, 11

---

ing is that the king and princes are in a heathen land where the Law cannot be fulfilled because the land is unclean. But it is more likely that we should take the words as an independent sentence, and explain 'law' as the ritual direction given by the priests (Jer. xviii. 18, see the note; Ezek. vii. 26, Mal. ii. 7). The verse then expresses the same idea with reference to three classes, rulers, priests, and prophets, that they are precluded from exercising their proper duties. It is the function of kings and princes to rule; but obviously when they and their people are exiles in a foreign land this has become impossible; the duty of the priest is to give *torah* or ritual instruction, but with the cessation of the cultus there is no demand for *torah*; the prophet is such because he receives 'vision' from Yahweh and proclaims to the people what he has thus learnt, but though there are prophets in the captivity Yahweh vouchsafes them no vision, their vocation has gone. This last statement is somewhat surprising from a poet who was apparently acquainted with Ezekiel's prophecies and had been influenced by them. But presumably he is thinking here, as in 14, of the prophets whom Jeremiah and Ezekiel alike condemned and whom the fall of Jerusalem had discredited. We should render the two lines:

'Her king and her princes are among the nations; there is no
priestly direction;
Also her prophets find not a vision from Yahweh.'

10. While king and princes govern no longer, while priests have no occupation, and prophets see no vision, the elders sit in dumb despair on the ground and no longer give counsel in the gate. They have sprinkled dust on their head (2 Sam. xiii. 19, Job ii. 2, Ezek. xxvii. 30) and girded themselves with sackcloth, both expressions of mourning. The virgins in deep dejection bow their heads to the ground.

11. The poet, in a moving passage, now describes his own anguish at the suffering of his people in the siege, especially at the pitiful spectacle of the little children swooning from hunger

My liver is poured upon the earth, for the [a] destruction
of the daughter of my people;
Because the young children and the sucklings swoon in
the streets of the city.
12 They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine?
When they swoon as the wounded in the streets of the
city,
When their soul is poured out into their mothers'
bosom.
13 What shall I [b] testify unto thee? what shall I liken to
thee, O daughter of Jerusalem?

---

[a] Or, *breach* [b] Or, *take to witness for thee*

---

in the streets, vainly begging for food which the heart-broken mothers have no power to give. His pity for the children comes out again in 20, iv. 3, 4, 10.

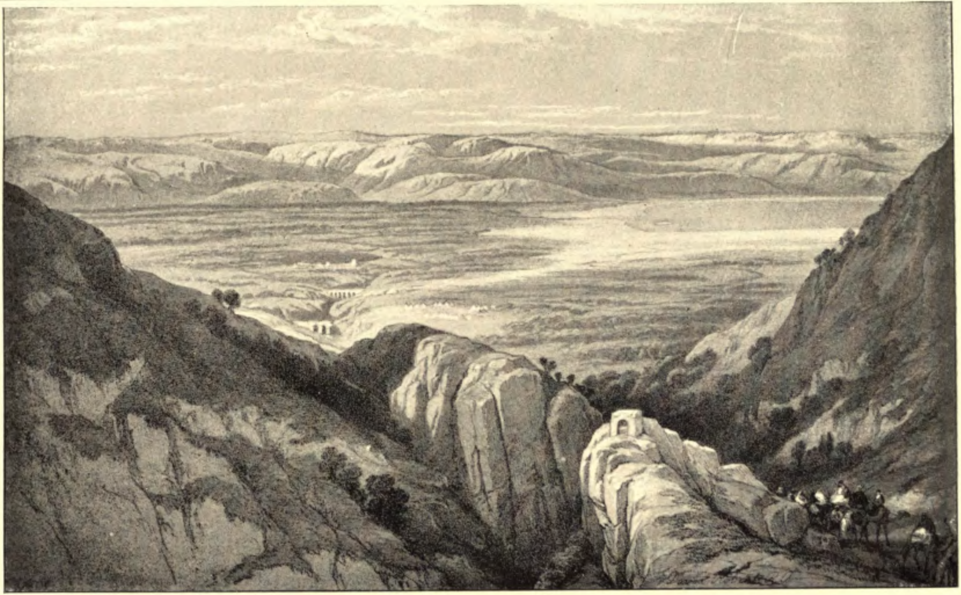
My liver: mentioned like the bowels as a seat of emotion. The statement that it is poured on the ground is strangely expressed, but it is to be compared with the similar phrase 'Pour out thine heart' in 19: cf. Ps. lxii. 8.

12. corn and wine. Budde omits 'and wine,' no doubt correctly. The metre requires the omission; the request for wine is not in itself probable, and elsewhere the word for wine used here *(yāyin)* is coupled with that for 'bread;' a different word for wine (*tīrōsh*) being combined with 'corn.' In the LXX, where the Hebrew speaks of some one as eating, the translator often adds that he drank. Here a similar addition has been made, while the Syriac, by a still more thoughtless addition, reads 'corn and wine and oil.'

their soul is poured out: i.e. they lapse into unconsciousness, either of swoon or death; the former seems to be intended here. A pathetic touch is added to the picture by the last words: the mother strains to her breast the exhausted body of her child as it faints with hunger.

13. The poet tries to bethink himself of some parallel catastrophe; if he could discover one, Zion might take some comfort from the fact that her disaster was not unexampled. Alas, it is immeasurable as the sea.

testify unto thee. Of what can he assure Zion? But we should probably correct the text and, with Krochmal and Meinhold, read 'compare' (*'e'ĕrōk*) for 'testify,' as in Isa. xl. 18.



The Way of the Arabah

What shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee,
O virgin daughter of Zion?
For thy breach is great like the sea: who can heal thee?
Thy prophets have seen visions for thee of vanity and foolishness; 14
And they have not discovered thine iniquity, to bring again thy captivity:
But have seen for thee [a] burdens of vanity and [b] causes of banishment.
All that pass by clap their hands at thee; 15
They hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, *saying*:

---

[a] †Or, *oracles* [b] Or, *things to draw thee aside*

---

14. The poet complains of the prophets, who have prophesied falsely and covered up the sin of Jerusalem. If they had only done their duty, he implies, the captivity might have been averted. It is remarkable that he ignores Jeremiah's pessimistic verdict on the conduct of the people, and the obstinate self-complacency on which his message made but little impression. Nor could Jeremiah be himself the writer of this passage. He judged the situation quite differently. True, he denounced the prophets in scathing terms. But priests and people were held guilty by him, and he would have refused to excuse them on the score that the prophets had not done their duty.

foolishness. The word bears rather the sense of 'whitewash:' the prophets have palliated the conduct of the people, represented it in altogether too favourable a light.

to bring again thy captivity: see note on Jer. xxix. 14. Here the term apparently means 'to avert thy captivity;' the A.V., to turn away thy captivity,' hits the sense better.

causes of banishment. The word occurs here only, but the derivation fixes its meaning as 'banishment.' The meaning annot be that the prophets foresaw the expulsion of Judah, for hey strenuously denied it, but that the attitude which they encourged by their oracles inevitably led to exile. The visions they saw were in this sense 'causes of banishment.'

15. The mockery of the travellers (i. 12) as they pause to contemplate the ruins of the once famous city. Probably the gestures n this verse are intended to express scorn and astonishment rather han exultation: see Job xxvii. 23, 'Men shall clap their hands at

Is this the city that men called The perfection of beauty,
The joy of the whole earth?
16 All thine enemies have opened their mouth wide against thee;
They hiss and gnash the teeth; they say, We have swallowed her up;
Certainly this is the day that we looked for; we have found, we have seen it.
17 The LORD hath done that which he devised;
He hath [a] fulfilled his word that he commanded in the days of old;
He hath thrown down, and hath not pitied:
And he hath caused the enemy to rejoice over thee,

---

[a] Or, *finished*

---

him, And shall hiss him out of his place;' Zeph. ii. 15, 'every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand;' Jer. xviii. 16, 2 Kings xix. 21, Ps. xxii. 7.

that men called. This should be struck out on account of the metre, probably also 'the city.' The line gains greatly in force by the omissions.

The perfection of beauty: cf. Ps. l. 2, Ezek. xvi. 14 (and with reference to Tyre), xxvii. 4, xxviii. 12.

The joy of the whole earth: so Ps. xlviii. 2, cf. Isa. lx. 15.

16. While the traveller, who has no animosity against Jerusalem, views the ruins with amazement and contempt, the gestures of her enemies express their bitter hate and vindictive joy at her overthrow. The first line is imitated in iii. 46.

opened their mouth wide: cf. Ps. xxii. 13, xxxv. 21. Löhr points out that our poem has several points of contact with Ps. xxxv. Thus 'gnash the teeth' in this verse and Ps. xxxv. 16; 'we have swallowed her up,' so Ps. xxxv. 25; 'we have seen it,' cf. Ps. xxxv. 21.

17. The judgement which has come on Jerusalem is only what Yahweh had long meditated and foretold. Lev. xxvi. 14 ff., Deut. xxviii. 15 ff. are often said to be in the poet's mind; the latter may well be, the former is on critical grounds more uncertain. But it would be a mistake to exclude the threats uttered by the prophets. 'The days of old' need not refer to remote antiquity; the prophets of the eighth century would be reckoned to that period.

He hath exalted the horn of thine adversaries.
Their heart cried unto the Lord: 18
O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like
a river day and night;
Give thyself no respite; let not the apple of thine eye
cease.
Arise, cry out in the night, at the beginning of the 19
watches;

---

exalted the horn: see note on 3; cf. Ps. lxxxix. 17, 24, xcii. 10, cxii. 9, cxlviii. 14; 1 Sam. ii. 1, 10.

18. It is generally recognized that the beginning of the verse is corrupt. The present text begins with the statement that 'their heart cried' (whose heart is not said), and then the wall of Jerusalem is bidden weep, cry out, and intercede for the life of her young children. The arrangement in the E.V., according to which the statement is detached from the exhortation, to some extent disguises the difficulty, which is felt more acutely when it is seen that the first line goes down to 'Zion.' But a statement is out of place here, and the reference to the wall is also strange. The verse should begin with exhortation. Ewald read the imperative 'cry' for the perfect 'cried' (*tsa'ăqi* for *tsā'aq*), and this emendation has been generally accepted, though opinions differ as to the precise restoration of the rest of the phrase, e.g. 'cry out with thy heart,' 'cry out with thy voice.' For 'O wall of the daughter of Zion' several scholars read 'O virgin daughter of Zion,' supposing that the present text has originated under the influence of 8. This is probably the correct solution, though other suggestions have been made to restore an original in closer conformity with the present text. Cheyne reads 'Cry out because of Jerusalem's disgrace, Zion's insult.'

let tears run down: cf. Jer. xiv. 17.

apple of thine eye: cf. Deut. xxxii. 10, Ps. xvii. 8 for this designation of the pupil of the eye, though in these passages it is mentioned as an object of peculiar care.

19. This verse contains a line too many. The fourth line should be struck out as a later addition. The gloss was occasioned by the feeling that the peril by which the lives of Zion's children was endangered needed to be stated. It rested, however, on the mistaken view that the children were those of tender age, whose pitiful condition has come before us in 11, 12. But presumably they are the inhabitants as a whole, and the situation reflected is that after the fall of the city, not during the privations of the siege.

Pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord:
Lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children,
That faint for hunger at the top of every street.
20 See, O LORD, and behold, to whom thou hast done thus!
Shall the women eat their fruit, the children that are dandled in the hands?
Shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?

The line is based on 12, iv. 1; cf. Isa. l. 20, Nah. iii. 10. Ball thinks that 'for the life of thy young children' was originally 'for what he hath done unto thee.'

at the beginning of the watches: at the beginning of each of the three watches into which the night was at this time divided. As the watchman utters his cry, the sleeper is aroused, called back from the oblivion of slumber to the bitter realities of life.

Pour out thine heart: cf. 11. The hands were uplifted in prayer, which was often uttered in a loud voice.

20. Zion, in obedience to the poet's behest, utters her prayer to God, or rather a remonstrance with Him for the desolation He has wrought. The questions are rhetorical, they do not plead that the horrors enumerated shall not happen; they have happened already; is God to be indifferent to them? For the first cf. the hideous story of the siege of Samaria, 2 Kings vi. 25–30. That matters would come to this extremity in the siege is foretold in Deut. xxviii. 53, cf. Jer. xix. 9, Lev. xxvi. 29. The closing words at the end of the second line are added to heighten the pitifulness of the description by a reference to the helpless infancy of the victims, and the fond affection which in happier days had been lavished upon them by those who are now driven by desperate hunger to so unnatural a deed. To this outrage on natural sanctities the poet adds an outrage on the sanctities of religion. Presumably the reference is to the butchery of priests and prophets in the Temple by the Babylonians after the capture of the city. The place of the priest was in the Temple; the prophets may have taken refuge in it, believing (cf. Rev. xi. 1, 2) that it at least could not be taken by the enemy.

The youth and the old man lie on the ground in the streets; 21
My virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword:
Thou hast slain them in the day of thine anger; thou hast slaughtered, *and* not pitied.
Thou hast called, as in the day of a solemn assembly, [a] my terrors on every side, 22
And there was none that escaped or remained in the day of the LORD's anger:
Those that I have dandled and brought up hath mine enemy consumed.

I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath. 3

[a] See Jer. vi. 25.

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21. Further description of the butchery, which spared neither age nor sex.

22. The R.V. means that Yahweh has summoned all the terrors of war, plague, and famine to effect the ruin of Jerusalem; He has called them as if to a festival, a festival of carnage from which none has escaped. But it is also possible, following the LXX, to take the word rendered 'terrors' to mean 'hamlets.' The point is in that case that the inhabitants of the surrounding districts have been summoned to Jerusalem, and thus their fate also has been sealed, so that none have survived (so Ewald and Löhr). But the parallel with the Jeremianic phrase 'Terror round about' favours the R.V. rendering, and, as Budde points out, Zion in the last line simply laments the loss of her own inhabitants.

iii. 1-66. THE THIRD ELEGY.

This poem is generally regarded, and with justice, as below the level of Lam. i in poetic value, and still more below that of ii and iv. It is of the same length as i and ii, but whereas in these the first of each triad of lines begins with the letter required by the alphabetic scheme, in this each line of the triad begins with that letter; moreover the lines of the triad are less closely knit together by community of subject-matter. The exigencies of this artificial scheme have been to some extent responsible for the literary inferiority of the composition.

2 He hath led me and caused me to walk in darkness [a] and not in light.

[a] Or, *without light*

The question that arouses the keenest discussion is that of the identity of the speaker. That he is an individual sufferer is held by several, especially Budde and now Löhr; that he speaks in the name of the community, or that the community itself is the speaker, is held by a considerable number of recent writers. Budde's advocacy of the individual identification is very interesting in view of his strong vindication of the national interpretation of the Servant of Yahweh. Some of the features in the poem speak strongly for it, e.g. 1 and 27; also the change to the plural in 40–47, where the metaphors are more suitable to the experiences of a people than in the rest of the chapter. The representation of the people as a man, in view of its representation elsewhere as feminine, is also improbable. The inclusion in this book, which is concerned with the miseries of the nation, no doubt constitutes a presumption that here also the nation is the subject. But from this we can argue only as to the interpretation placed on the poems by the compiler, not as to that intended by its author. And even so far as the compiler is concerned, if he regarded Jeremiah as the author of the Lamentations, he might well have included a poem which he took to be a description of Jeremiah's personal experiences; the community of authorship rather than of subject justifying its combination with elegies on the nation.

The question has passed into a new stage with Löhr's more recent investigations in Stade's *Zeitschrift* for 1904. He thinks that the poem reflects inconsistent situations (1–24 and 52–66; also 48–51 and 52–66). He points out that 6 occurs as a quotation in Ps. cxliii, but there it is in its original form, here it has been altered to suit the acrostic scheme. He infers that 1–24 contains substantially the Psalm from which the author of Ps. cxliii quoted, but as we have it, it has been turned into an acrostic by the author of our chapter. 52–66 contains a second Psalm, in which also the speaker is an individual, and which has similarly been turned by the author into an acrostic. 25–50 contains the author's own contribution, and most clearly betrays his intention to represent the speaker as undertaking the rôle of Jeremiah. This theory is persuasively stated by Löhr, and it is by no means improbable that, as several scholars have thought, the poet speaks in the character of Jeremiah. It is also the case that the composition does seem not to hang together throughout. Still the explanation offered is in any case somewhat speculative, and the theory as to origin a little difficult to accept. Moreover, the present writer cannot admit all the references to Jeremiah pointed

Surely against me he turneth his hand again and again 3
all the day.

My flesh and my skin hath he [a] made old; he hath 4
broken my bones.
He hath builded against me, and compassed me with 5
[b] gall and travail.
[c] He hath made me to dwell in dark places, as those 6
that have been long dead.

---

[a] †Or, *worn out* [b] See Deut. xxix. 18. [c] See Ps. cxliii. 3.

---

out by Löhr to be really such. But he has rightly called attention to phenomena which deserve consideration.

iii. 1. The speaker points to himself as one who has 'seen,' i. e. experienced, 'affliction,' in that he has been smitten by Yahweh in His anger; cf. for the expression Isa. x. 5, though the reference here is wider, Ps. lxxxix. 32. It is noteworthy that Yahweh is unnamed, but precarious to infer that the author wrote this elegy as a continuation of Lam. ii. 'I am the man' would not form a good continuation to ii. 22, where Zion speaks as a woman. Cf. for a similar reference to God without naming Him Job iii. 20 (see note). This continues throughout 1-16, where the author is describing God's hard dealings; also in the prayer 17-21, where we have the second personal pronoun, but no direct address to Yahweh. Only when from the depressing recital of the miseries inflicted by Him and the pitiful entreaty, the writer begins to speak of His goodness and mercy, does he abandon the pronoun for the name itself.

4. From the general statements of 1-3, the author now passes to a detailed description of his miseries under many figures, frequently of a conventional character, drawn especially from Job and the Psalms.

made old: or 'worn away.' The constant tribulations have worn him to a shadow.

broken my bones: cf. Isa. xxxviii. 13, Ps. li. 8, Jer. l. 17.

5. The strange combination 'gall and travail' suggests that the text is in disorder. Since the word rendered 'gall' also means head,' it is natural that several should take it so here and emend the text. The simplest suggestion is that of Praetorius, 'and compassed my head with travail.' But this does not yield a felicitous sense, nor are other suggestions more fortunate. Schleusner's emendation 'gall and wormwood' would avoid the incongruous combination in the present text.

6. This verse recurs in Ps. cxliii. 3. The speaker compares his

7 He hath fenced me about, that I cannot go forth; he hath made my chain heavy.

8 Yea, when I cry and call for help, he shutteth out my prayer.

9 He hath fenced up my ways with hewn stone, he hath made my paths crooked

10 He is unto me as a bear lying in wait, as a lion in secret places.

11 He hath turned aside my ways, and pulled me in pieces; he hath made me desolate.

12 He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for the arrow

13 He hath caused the [a] shafts of his quiver to enter into my reins.

[a] Heb. *sons.*

---

wretched lot to that of the dead who dwell in the gloomy recesses of Sheol. It is not clear whether we should render as R.V. or substitute 'those that are for ever dead.' In the latter case the point seems to be the hopelessness of any return to a happier state; in the former case the point might be that the dead of the primaeval era dwelt in exceptionally dark regions of Sheol. A reference to the exceptionally wicked antediluvians might be intended. Ps. lxxxviii. 4–6, 10–12 may be compared.

7. Cf. Job xix. 8. This chapter seems to have been in the writer's mind: for 5 cf. Job xix. 12; for 8 cf. Job xix. 7. Here a double metaphor is used to describe his loss of freedom; his way is blocked, and his heavy chain fetters his movements.

8. The speaker complains, as Job does (xix. 7, xxx. 20), that God refuses to hear his prayer.

9. The meaning seems to be that God has piled blocks of hewn stone in his way, and thus driven him into by-paths which lead in a wrong direction.

10. For a similar combination of lion and bear cf. Hos. xiii. 8. Possibly this verse carries on the figure of 9; driven into the winding by-ways, he falls into the clutches of beasts of prey.

11. For the first clause cf. 9; the second perhaps takes up the metaphor of 10.

12, 13. Job xvi. 12, 13 seems to be in the author's mind; cf. also vi. 4.

I am become a derision to all my people; and their 14
song all the day.
He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath sated me with 15
wormwood.

He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he 16
hath covered me with ashes.
And thou hast [a] removed my soul far off from peace; 17
I forgat prosperity.
And I said, My strength is perished, and mine expecta- 18
tion from the LORD.

Remember mine affliction and my [b] misery, the worm- 19
wood and the gall.
My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is bowed 20
down within me.

---

[a] Or, *cast off* [b] Or, *wandering* Or, *outcast state*

14. The verse recalls Jer. xx. 7, 8: cf. Job xii. 4, xxx. 1, 9; Ps. lxix. 11, 12. A variant reading for 'my people' is 'peoples.' The choice between them largely depends on the view taken as the question whether the speaker is an individual, or the nation.

15. Cf. Job ix. 18, Jer. ix. 15.

16. Cf. Prov. xx. 17. Whether the meaning is that gravel is mixed with his bread, or that he is fed with gravel instead of bread (cf. Matt. vii. 9), is not clear. The correctness of the text has been doubted. Cheyne suggests 'And I girded sackcloth on my flesh; I rolled myself in ashes' (*Enc. Bib.* 2699).

17. thou hast removed. The second person is strange in this description, since up to this point the third person has been used. The rendering 'my soul is rejected' is possible, but in view of 31 and Ps. lxxxviii. 14 improbable. The LXX reads 'he has removed,' and this is probably to be accepted. Ball suggests 'And he cast off my soul for ever.'

19, 20. Now the speaker appeals to God to remember his affliction and wandering (see note on i. 7). It would be more regular if 20 continued the appeal, or if 19 did not contain a prayer. Löhr adopts the former alternative, rendering 20 'Remember, yea remember, that bowed down in me is my soul.' Budde adopts the latter, rendering 19, with a change in punctuation, 'The memory of my affliction and wandering is wormwood and gall.'

21 This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope.

22 *It is of* the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed,
because his compassions fail not.
23 They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness.
24 The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will
I hope in him.

25 The LORD is good unto them that wait for him, to the
soul that seeketh him.
26 It is good that a man should hope and quietly wait for
the salvation of the LORD.
27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

---

21. This. The structure favours the reference to what has preceded; but it is more suitable to refer it to the beautiful description which follows, in spite of the awkwardness involved in breaking into the alphabetic group of three verses to which 21 belongs. His hope is inspired by remembrance of God's unfailing mercy.

22, 23. There are some metrical irregularities in these verses. For the first person we should probably read the third (so Targum and Syriac), and omit 'that,' 'because,' rendering 'The Lord's mercies are not spent, his compassions fail not.' Since the first part of 23 is too short, we might transfer 'his compassions' to this verse 'New every morning are his compassions;' reading 'they fail not' in 22.

24. Cf. Ps. xvi. 5, lxxiii. 26, cxix. 57, cxlii. 5.

25–27. Each verse of this group begins with the Hebrew word rendered 'good,' which strikes its key-note. First we have an expression of faith in God's goodness (25), which encourages a man to wait patiently for God's deliverance even in the midst of suffering (26), which he is better enabled to bear because he recognizes the moral value of the discipline (27). Löhr aptly compares Rom. v. 3–5.

26. The Hebrew is difficult, but the R.V. gives what must be the general sense intended. Cf. Ps. xxxvii. 7, xl. 4, lxii. 1, Jer. xvii. 7.

27. The inference of J. D. Michaelis that the verse was written by a young man has no cogency. It might even better be argued that it is the judgement of a man no longer young, looking back from the vantage-ground of long experience, and recognizing the value of the discipline through which he passed in his youth. Cf.

[a] Let him sit alone and keep silence, because he hath 28
laid it upon him.
Let him put his mouth in the dust; if so be there may 29
be hope.
Let him give his cheek to him that smiteth him; let him 30
be filled full with reproach.

For the Lord will not cast off for ever. 31
For though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion 32
according to the multitude of his mercies
For he doth not afflict [b] willingly, nor grieve the 33
children of men.

---

[a] Or, *He sitteth alone &c.* (vv. 28–30)
[b] Heb. *from his heart.*

---

the fine exposition of the thought in Heb. xii. 7–11. The reading 'from his youth' found in several Hebrew MSS. and in some Versions is probably due to a scribe's blunder. Cheyne, on the ground that our present text introduces an idea which is not further utilized, reads with comparatively slight change, 'It is good that he bear mutely the rebuke of Yahweh' (*Enc. Bib.* 2699).

28–30. In view of the considerations brought forward in 25–27, let the man who is suffering at God's hand bear it with resignation and self-abasement, and even endure buffeting and contumely from his fellows. For 28 cf. i. 1, ii. 10, Jer. xv. 17.

29. There is no parallel in the Old Testament to the first clause; the attitude of prostration with the face on the ground is a typically Oriental expression of complete and silent submission. The phrase 'to lick the dust' imports an abject element into the surrender.

30. Cf. Isa. l. 6, in a soliloquy by the Servant of Yahweh; Matt. v. 39; also Job xvi. 10.

31–33. The dumb submission enjoined in 28–30 is recommended by the assurance that Yahweh's rejection of the sufferer will not be permanent (31), since His mercy will ultimately incline Him to compassion (32), for it is from no delight in inflicting pain that He chastises the children of men (33).

31. Cf. Ps. xxx. 5 (see R.V. marg.), lxxvii. 7–10, ciii. 9, Isa. lvii. 16, Mic. vii. 18. Several scholars think that on metrical grounds the verse is too short. The easiest suggestion is to insert 'man' as the object, but 'children of men' would be less bald. Ball suggests 'his soul,' cf his emendation of 17.

34 To crush under foot all the prisoners of the earth,
35 To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the
Most High,
36 To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord [a]approveth
not.

37 Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the
Lord commandeth it not?
38 Out of the mouth of the Most High cometh there not
evil and good?
39 Wherefore doth a living man complain, [b]a man for the
punishment of his sins?

[a] Heb. *seeth not.* [b] Or, *a man that is in his sins*

34–36. The passage is difficult. The R.V. rendering is accepted by several, but others consider that 'approveth' is an illegitimate translation. The alteration of one consonant would yield this sense. It is better to retain the strict sense of the word (see margin), and take the passage as interrogative, 'Doth not the LORD see?' The exigencies of the acrostic scheme are probably responsible for the infelicity of the Hebrew. The evils which Yahweh marks with disapproval are, first, the oppression of captives by their conquerors, or prisoners by those in whose power they are; and secondly, the withholding or perversion of justice.

37–39. Yahweh has cognizance of all the wrong wrought on the earth (34–36), for nothing is done by man save by His permission (37); both calamity and prosperity follow His behest (38); let man refrain from complaint, his suffering is recompence for his sin (39).

37. Cf. Ps. xxxiii. 9; the first part of the verse refers here to man, though the expression is more suitably used of God.

38. Cf. Amos iii. 6, Isa. xlv. 7. The Most High, the Supreme Lord of the universe, controls the whole course of history; evil cannot be wrought, apart from His permission. The Satan cannot touch Job till God gives him leave. The speculative problem created for Theism by such a statement is not before the writer's mind.

39. This sentence is difficult. Some take it to contain question and answer, 'Of what should a living man complain? Each (should complain) of his sins.' Probably, however, the R.V. rendering is preferable; the meaning being that man should not

Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the 40
LORD.
Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the 41
heavens.
We have transgressed and have rebelled; thou hast 42
not pardoned.
Thou hast [a] covered with anger and pursued us; thou 43
hast slain, thou hast not pitied.
Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that *our* prayer 44
should not pass through.

[a] †Or, *covered* thyself

---

indulge in murmurs at his misfortunes, they are the penalty for his sin. The word rendered 'the punishment of his sins' more commonly, it is true, means 'sin,' and this favours the former interpretation. But since the two previous verses of the group contain questions without answers, it is more symmetrical to adopt the same here. The point of the adjective 'living' is not clear. It may be, so long as a man has life, he has no reason for complaint; his punishment falls short of the death which is the due meed of his sins. (For an emendation by Cheyne see *Enc. Bib.* 2699.)

40–42. The recognition that suffering is due to sin (39) should lead to self-examination and repentance (40), followed by prayer (41) and penitent confession (42).

41. Lifting of hands was a common gesture in ancient prayer. But the formal exercise, to be effective, must carry the heart with it. Perhaps the thought is, let us offer our heart on our hands, i.e. present the whole heart to God in prayer.

42. The last clause constitutes a transition to the next group.

43. With this verse a description of the miseries of the people begins, which continues to 47.

covered. According to the R.V. text, the meaning is that God has overwhelmed His people with anger and pursued them. But this can hardly be the meaning; we should have expected the order of the verbs to be inverted, and the following verse suggests that we should render, as in the margin, 'covered *thyself*.' He had clothed Himself in His fiery indignation and pursued His people, slaying without mercy.

44. That God dwelt in clouds and darkness is a thought which

45 Thou hast made us *as* the offscouring and refuse in the midst of the peoples.

46 All our enemies have opened their mouth wide against us.

47 Fear and the pit are come upon us, [a] devastation and destruction.

48 Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water, for the destruction of the daughter of my people.

49 Mine eye poureth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission,

50 Till the LORD look down, and behold from heaven.

51 Mine eye affecteth my soul, because of all the daughters of my city.

[a] Or, *tumult*

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frequently recurs in Hebrew poetry, where it is used with the finest effects. Here the thought is that God has thus wrapped Himself in cloud that the prayer of His people may not penetrate to Him.

45. Cf. 1 Cor. iv. 13. The meaning is that Israel is reduced to a position of the utmost humiliation in the sight of the nations; cf. 14.

46. Taken from ii. 16.

47. Fear and the pit: see on Jer. xlviii. 43. There is a slighter assonance in the Hebrew in the latter part of the verse, which is imitated in the R.V.

48. Cf. i. 16, Jer. xiii. 17; a still closer parallel to the first clause is found in Ps. cxix. 136, for the last clause see ii. 11. This verse is connected with the next group by the reference to 'mine eye.'

49-51. Löhr rightly points out that 50 would stand better at the end of the group than 51, and suggests that the original order may have been 51, 49, 50.

49. For the incessant weeping cf. Jer. ix. 1.

51. The sense is obscurely expressed. The first clause is generally taken to mean that the constant weeping has inflamed his eyes and is causing him physical pain, 'my soul' meaning simply 'myself.' The remainder of the verse has been very variously interpreted; the sense is probably that the sufferings of the women of Jerusalem have caused him to weep thus incessantly.

They have chased me sore like a bird, that are mine 52
enemies without cause.
They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and have cast 53
a stone upon me.
Waters flowed over mine head; I said, I am cut off. 54
I called upon thy name, O LORD, out of the lowest 55
dungeon.
Thou heardest my voice; hide not thine ear at my 56
breathing, at my cry.
Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee: 57
thou saidst, Fear not.
O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou 58
hast redeemed my life.
O LORD, thou hast seen my wrong; judge thou my 59
cause.

---

52. The speaker turns now to his own afflictions, of which he gives a metaphorical description. That the language is figurative is clear in 52, but we should probably take the reference to imprisonment in the dungeon in the same way. If the poet had Jeremiah's experiences in mind he has not kept closely to them; 54 in particular had no counterpart in the experience described in Jer. xxxviii. 6-13, but is excluded by the fact that there was no water in his dungeon. A stone may have been placed over the mouth of the pit in which he was confined, but we have no reference to it in the story. The words may mean, however, 'have cast stones at me,' and this would be quite inconsistent with any reference in the clause to Jeremiah's experience. Ball, however, reads for 53b 'They brought me down to Abaddon,' an attractive but not quite easy emendation. The figures of pursuit by hunters, of confinement in dungeons, of waters going over the head, are quite common especially in the Psalms.

55-57. The speaker looks back at his prayer in the dungeon and God's response. Verse 56b, 'hide not . . . cry,' seems to contain the gist of the prayer uttered in the dungeon.

58. The speaker is still looking back on an experience which has come to an end. Yahweh has acted as his advocate in the law-court, and secured a verdict for His client.

59-66. Now the speaker passes from the former situation

60 Thou hast seen all their vengeance and all their devices
against me.

61 Thou hast heard their reproach, O Lord, and all their
devices against me;

62 The lips of those that rose up against me, and their
imagination against me all the day.

63 Behold thou their sitting down, and their rising up;
I am their song.

64 Thou wilt render unto them a recompence, O Lord,
according to the work of their hands.

65 Thou wilt give them [a] hardness of heart, thy curse unto
them.

66 Thou wilt pursue them in anger, and destroy them from
under the heavens of the Lord.

4 How is the gold become dim! *how* is the most pure
gold changed!

---

[a] †Or, *blindness*. Heb. *covering*.

---

which he has been describing, and invokes Yahweh's help against the enemies from whom he is at present suffering.

62. lips: i.e. utterances. It is governed by 'thou hast heard' in 61.

63. sitting down and **rising up:** cf. Ps. cxxxix. 2; it is a comprehensive expression for a man's life in general. For the last clause cf. 14.

64. Cf. Ps. xxviii. 4.

65. thy curse unto them: to be taken as an imprecation, not as dependent on 'give.'

iv. 1–22. The Fourth Elegy.

This chapter is an acrostic poem, which adopts the same alphabetic order as ii and iii. It is, however, shorter than the first three poems, since each alphabetic group consists of two lines only instead of three. It is very closely related in content to the second elegy, and probably proceeds from the same author. Points of contact between the two poems are the emphasis on the responsibility of the religious leaders for the catastrophe, and the compassion felt for the sufferings of the children. Each poem

The stones of the sanctuary are poured out at the top
of every street.

The precious sons of Zion, [a] comparable to fine gold, 2

---

[a] Heb. *that may be weighed against.*

seems to have been written by an eye-witness. There is also a similarity in the arrangement, according to which both fall into two main sections. The differences even more strongly suggest unity of authorship, since the two poems are apparently designed to be mutually complementary. For the date see the Introduction to ii.

The poem opens with a contrast between the former glory of Zion's sons and their present wretchedness. This is illustrated by the unnatural cruelty of the mothers to their children, and the miserable condition of those once surrounded with luxury. Their sin must be greater than Sodom's, since their lingering agony is so much worse than Sodom's swift overthrow. The poet then describes once more the extremities to which famine has reduced the nobles, and the unnatural deeds it has caused the mothers to commit. So terrible, so unexpected a punishment, is due to the sins of priests and prophets, who are as unclean as lepers, through the shedding of innocent blood. Then the poet speaks of the vain hopes of help from Egypt; and passes on to describe the closing period of the siege, and the capture of the king. He closes with a bitter reference to Edom's exultation, predicting that her turn will come, while the sin of Zion is now fully expiated.

iv. 1. The fine gold and the stones are not to be taken literally, but, as **2** explains, they are the citizens of Zion. The word rendered 'is become dim' occurs nowhere else; if the text is correct this translation may be accepted. The verb rendered 'is changed' has an Aramaic form, its correctness is dubious; Nöldeke and Löhr point differently and read 'is become odious', but Bickell's suggestion that we should delete the last consonant and take the word as an adjective meaning 'old' (*yāshān*) is preferable: 'How is the ancient gold become dim the most pure gold.' Cheyne's suggestion 'Sheba's gold' is not so easy.

stones of the sanctuary. We might also render 'holy stones.' But neither is satisfactory; the representation that at the street corners the stones of the Temple were poured out is too improbable even in a metaphor. The sense required is 'precious stones;' Budde gains it by emendation; others think the present text may be so interpreted.

2. The explanation of 1: the fine gold is the precious sons of Zion; they too are the precious stones, esteemed of no more worth than crockery made of common clay.

How are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work
of the hands of the potter !
3 Even the jackals draw out the breast, they give suck to
their young ones :
The daughter of my people is become cruel, like the
ostriches in the wilderness.
4 The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof
of his mouth for thirst :
The young children ask bread, and no man breaketh
it unto them.
5 They that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets :
They that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills.
6 For [a] the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater
than [b] the sin of Sodom,

[a] Or, *the punishment of the iniquity*

[b] Or, *the punishment of the sin*

---

3. The jackals, contemptible and greedy beasts of prey as they are, suckle their whelps ; but Judah has become cruel like the ostrich. For the 'cruelty' of the ostrich cf. Job xxxix. 13–17 (with the notes). But the idea that Judah is cruel to her children is not what we expect, nor very intelligible. We expect rather that the mothers have under the pressure of famine become unnatural to their little ones, as the ostrich to her young. It is better, therefore, to read 'the daughters of my people are become cruel' (so Bickell, Budde). The change to the more familiar 'daughter of my people' was very natural.

4. The two lines refer to children in different stages. The mother withholds her breast from the child who can take no other food ; while the children that can, though still unweaned, eat bread, have no one who will share the scanty supply with them. Cf. ii. 12.

5. It is disputed whether the reference is still to the children so delicately nurtured and daintily clad, or to the rich people generally, without reference to age. The second line favours the former view, if it is correctly rendered in R.V. ; but several prefer to translate 'borne on scarlet,' i. e. reclining on couches or litters upholstered with stuffs dyed scarlet and therefore very costly. This favours the latter view. There is no cogent reason for choosing either.

6. The text is probably to be preferred to the margin. That

That was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands
[a]were laid upon her.
Her [b]nobles were purer than snow, they were whiter 7
than milk,
They were more ruddy in body than [c]rubies, their
polishing was as of sapphire:
Their visage is [d]blacker than a coal; they are not 8
known in the streets:
Their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is
become like a stick.
They that be slain with the sword are better than they 9
that be slain with hunger;
For these [e]pine away, stricken through, for want of the
fruits of the field.

---

[a] Or, *fell* See 2 Sam. iii. 29. [b] Or, *Nazirites* [c] †Or, *corals* [d] Heb. *darker than blackness.* [e] Heb. *flow away.*

---

the sin of Judah is greater than that of Sodom (cf. Ezek. xvi. 47–50, Matt. xi. 23, 24), follows from the difference in their fate; Sodom fell by a sudden catastrophe, and did not linger in pain; Judah perished in a long-drawn-out agony, from which no circumstance of horror, indignity, cruelty, and privation was missing.

no hands were laid upon her: more literally 'no hands whirled round about her.' The meaning is apparently that Sodom fell at the hand of God. Some render 'none wrung their hands;' i. e. the catastrophe was too swift to leave time for this. Ball reads, 'and their ruin tarried not.'

7, 8. In a striking contrast the poet brings out the difference between the appearance of the nobles in their time of luxurious living and in the privations of the siege. Then they were fair, handsome, and well-nourished; now unrecognizable, they are so black and shrivelled (cf. Job xxx. 30), and reduced to skin and bone (cf. Job xix. 20). The second line of 7 is difficult. The word rendered 'polishing' is more literally 'shape;' but this gives no satisfactory meaning. Of suggested emendations, Ball's 'their body was a sapphire,' and Cheyne's 'their skin glitters like coral, (even) the bright colour of their flesh' (*Enc. Bib.* 4283), may be mentioned.

nobles: the primary meaning of the word is 'Nazirites;' but it bears the wider sense here.

10 The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children;
They were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.
11 The LORD hath accomplished his fury, he hath poured out his fierce anger;
And he hath kindled a fire in Zion, which hath devoured the foundations thereof.
12 The kings of the earth believed not, neither all the inhabitants of the world,
That the adversary and the enemy should enter into the gates of Jerusalem.
13 *It is* because of the sins of her prophets, *and* the iniquities of her priests,

---

9. The swift death on the battlefield was better than the slow death by famine. In the second line Ball reads, 'For they, they passed away with a stab suddenly in the field.' The Hebrew is unusual, and the text has often been suspected.

10. Cf. ii. 20. Hunger drives even the pitiful, affectionate mothers to this desperate extremity.

11. The language of the second line is, of course, metaphorical.

12. The meaning is not that Jerusalem was too strongly fortified to be captured. The author, as is the case with other Hebrew writers, thinks of the nations as sharing the fanatical belief of the Jews, so often rebuked by Jeremiah, in the inviolability of Zion. This conviction, which went back to the preaching of Isaiah, had been greatly strengthened by the deliverance of the capital from capture by Sennacherib in 701 B. C., while the people's assurance of its good standing with Yahweh had been confirmed by its acceptance of the Deuteronomic Law. Hence the possibility that Yahweh might be so angry with His people that He would even destroy His own city, as Micah had threatened in words long remembered by the people (see Jer. xxvi. 17–19 with the notes), seemed to have passed away. The writer of this verse had obviously held this belief, against which Jeremiah so solemnly protested. He could not therefore be identified with Jeremiah.

13. It is noteworthy that the poet fixes the responsibility for Zion's fate on her religious leaders. So Jeremiah had singled out the priests and prophets (Jer. v. 31, vi. 13, xxiii. 11 ff.). The accusation in the second line adds a feature in the indictment,

That have shed the blood of the just in the midst of
her.
They wander as blind men in the streets, they are polluted with blood, 14
So that men cannot touch their garments.
Depart ye, they cried unto them, Unclean! depart, depart, touch not: 15

---

which is not directly attested elsewhere. The narrative in Jer. xxvi is hardly relevant, since their desire to kill Jeremiah was due to special causes; and Jehoiakim seems to have been most to blame for the execution of Uriah.

The construction of the verse is a little difficult. It does not connect with 14, and obviously not with 12. We may either suppose that it connects with 11, the insertion of 12 between them being due to the exigencies of the acrostic scheme (so Löhr), or treat it as an independent sentence (so R.V.). The latter is much better, and we must either supply a verb (as R.V.) or preferably insert one in the Hebrew, e.g. 'they have entered' (*bā'ū*), which might easily have fallen out after 'her prophets' (so Budde). The metre gains by the insertion.

14. The passage is not quite clear; the R.V. gives the probable sense. The verse places us in the last days of Jerusalem. These priests and prophets wander blindly in the streets; they are polluted with the innocent blood they had shed in the time of their power, so that men shrink from them as they stagger by, lest they should contract ceremonial defilement from their garments.

as blind men. Löhr suspects a gloss. But there is a real point in the phrase. It depicts the helpless perplexity which has overtaken these rulers, once so confident and moving with such directness to their goal along an unscrupulous road. Now the ground is giving way beneath their feet and their universe tumbling in ruin about their ears.

15. Here those who shrank from contact with these blood-stained murderers (14), call out to them to leave the city on account of their uncleanness. The reference in 'Unclean!' seems to be to the cry of the leper (Lev. xiii. 45). It is no objection to this that it is the people, not the unclean person, who utter the cry. It is just the point that the people do utter it. The murderers, since they were not lepers, would obviously not feel under any obligation to declare themselves unclean. But the people hurl the cry at them, execrating them as no better than lepers, whose touch brought ceremonial pollution and whose lot

[a] When they fled away and wandered, men said among
the nations, They shall no more sojourn *here*.

16 The [b] anger of the LORD hath divided them; he will
no more regard them:
They respected not the persons of the priests, they
favoured not the elders.

17 Our eyes do yet fail *in looking* for our vain help:

---

[a] Or, *Yea*

[b] Heb. *face*.

it was to be hounded from the society of men. The verse is overladen. In the first line the words 'they cried unto them' are apparently an explanatory gloss, and the repetition of 'depart' in the second half of the line is due to dittography. The second line in its present text seems to mean that even after they had left Jerusalem and fled to foreign countries, they were not permitted to settle down. But it is too long. The simplest expedient is to strike out 'they said,' which is an explanatory gloss like that in the first line. Perhaps we should also omit 'among the nations,' which may have been a marginal gloss on 16ᵃ. But the text is also corrupt. The word rendered 'fled away' (*nātsū*) occurs nowhere else, and its sense is very dubious. Löhr reads 'When they were pleased (*rātsū*) to wander.' But this spoils the assonance in the original; moreover one is so forcibly reminded, in reading the Hebrew, of Gen. iv. 12, 14, that we instinctively correct the text in accordance with it and substitute *nādū*, which requires no alteration in the English rendering. Thus the fate of Cain falls on those who were guilty of his sin.

A clever but too drastic restoration of 14, 15 by Cheyne may be seen in the *Enc. Bib.* 2700.

16. The fate of the murderers. Yahweh Himself has scattered them; they are driven like Cain from His presence; priests and elders though they were, no respect was shown to them. For 'elders' we should have expected 'prophets;' the LXX reads this, and in spite of the suspicion that the easier text arouses, it may be the original which has been altered in the Hebrew through the influence of v. 12.

The anger of the LORD: literally 'the face of Yahweh,' which perhaps means rather 'Yahweh Himself;' cf. Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15 (where it is rendered 'presence'), 2 Sam. xvii. 11 (see R.V. margin), Isa. lxiii. 9, Pss. xxi. 9 (margin), xxxiv. 16.

17. The poet reckons himself with those who had vainly hoped for help from Egypt, a hope which Jeremiah had emphatically declared to be groundless. See Jer. xxxvii. 5-10.

In our watching we have watched for a nation that could
not save.
They hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets: 18
Our end is near, our days are fulfilled; for our end is
come.
Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of the heaven: 19
They chased us upon the mountains, they laid wait for
us in the wilderness.
The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of the LORD, 20
was taken in their pits;

---

watching: the word occurs only here; it is generally rendered 'watch-tower.'

18. The poet vividly describes the situation during the siege. If the R.V. is right, the point is that the besiegers commanded the streets from the siege-towers, so that it was dangerous for the inhabitants to walk about in them. But the word rendered 'streets' means 'a broad, open place,' not necessarily within the city itself. The meaning may be, that after the retreat of the Egyptians and the renewal of the siege, the inhabitants were unable to walk any longer outside the city walls.

19. It is often supposed that the passage refers, like the succeeding verse, to the capture of Zedekiah (2 Kings xxv. 4–6) and his retinue, in which the poet was himself included. This is uncertain; the reference is probably wider, and embraces all the fugitives who were captured. For the first line cf. Jer. iv. 13. The terms employed do not correspond well to the circumstances of Zedekiah's capture.

20. The metaphor from hunting is continued. It is not unusual for hunters to dig pits into which their victims may fall, sometimes to be impaled for a lingering death on the stakes they have fixed in it. The Babylonians succeeded in trapping Zedekiah. With loyal personal affection for the king on whom he had set his hopes, the poet speaks of him as 'the breath of our nostrils,' as if their continued existence was bound up with him. The phrase is an ancient one, being found in the Tel el-Amarna letters (fifteenth century B.C.), and the commentators quote a similar phrase from Seneca. The second line is thought by some to refer to the hopes entertained by the people that they might escape beyond Jordan into the mountains of Moab and Ammon (cf. Jer. xl. 11), and there under Zedekiah's government maintain an independent existence. But such an independence would have been precarious, and the

Of whom we said, Under his shadow we shall live
among the nations.

21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest
in the land of Uz:
The cup shall pass through unto thee also; thou shalt
be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.

22 [a] The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished,
O daughter of Zion;
He will no more carry thee away into captivity:
He will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom;
He will discover thy sins.

[a] †Or, *Thine iniquity hath an end*

---

kingship but a pale counterpart of the sovereignty he had exercised. More probably the poet is thinking of their hope in former days that they would maintain their national existence in their own land under Zedekiah, though so much had been lost in the catastrophe of 597 B.C. The Targum refers the passage to Josiah, since it could not understand terms of such appreciation applied to Zedekiah. But this is forbidden by the context.

21, 22. The hatred of the Jews for Edom, caused by its exultation over the fall of Jerusalem, finds expression in several passages, some among the most lurid in Hebrew prophecy; see Isa. xxxiv, lxiii. 1–6, Ezek. xxxv, Obad. 10–15, Ps. cxxxvii. 7. In this passage the poet bids Edom make the most of its opportunity, for soon it will have to drink of the same cup of shameful humiliation, while Judah has already received its punishment. For the figure of the cup cf. Jer. xxv. 15 ff., and for the close of 21 cf. Hab. ii. 15, 16.

in the land of Uz: see note on Jer. xxv. 20, also on Job i. 1. The LXX omits 'Uz'; 'the land' might then mean Palestine, and the allusion be to the annexation of Jewish territory by Edom, to which we have a reference in Ezek. xxxv. 10–12. For this 'in our land' would be better. It is likely on metrical grounds that a word should be struck out, all the more that either 'land' or 'Uz' might readily have risen by dittography out of the other. It would perhaps be best to read 'in Uz.'

The punishment . . . accomplished. The margin should be substituted; see note on 6. Judah's sin belongs to the past, it is over and done with (cf. Isa. xl. 1); Edom's as yet remains unpunished, but Yahweh will drag it into the light and punish it.

Remember, O LORD, what is come upon us: 5
Behold, and see our reproach.
Our inheritance is turned unto strangers, 2

---

v. 1–22. THE FIFTH POEM.

This poem consists, like i, ii, and iv, of twenty-two verses, yet it is not alphabetic in its arrangement, though Ball discovers some traces of a lost acrostic. It differs from its predecessors in that it is not written in the Qina rhythm. It is, strictly speaking, a prayer, but the greater part is occupied with a description of the miseries under which the people are suffering, some in one way and some in another. This description is an integral part of the prayer, being designed to appeal to Yahweh's compassion and secure His help. The poem is apparently later than ii and iv. It is concerned not with the horrors of the siege, unless 11, 12 are to be so interpreted; but with the wretched conditions of those who are left in Palestine, a feeble remnant, deprived of their ancestral possessions, the victims of penury, forced labour, and oppression. A considerable period has elapsed since the destruction of Jerusalem; those who were children at the time have now grown to manhood, and the poet speaks in a way which implies that Yahweh's apparent indifference seems to express a settled attitude, rather than a passing cloud of displeasure (20). We may therefore with some confidence place the poem fairly late in the exilic period. Yet there is no indication of any change in the political situation. It is therefore probable that the career of Cyrus had not yet begun, or, if it had, that the author had no knowledge of it. He wrote presumably in Judaea.

The poet appeals to Yahweh to look on the affliction of the people. They have lost their homes, their fathers are in exile, their mothers no more fortunate than widows. They are grievously oppressed and serve the foreigner for bread. Their miseries are due to the sins of their forefathers, who died with their guilt unexpiated. Upstarts are their governors; their bread they win at the risk of their lives; they are fevered with famine. Women are dishonoured, princes hanged up by the hand. Young men carry the mill, boys stagger under the firewood. All joy has ceased; their crown lies in the dust. It is the penalty of their sin. Above all, they grieve for the desolation of Zion. But the throne of Yahweh abides for ever; why does He forsake and forget His people for ever? Let Him bring them back; if indeed He has not utterly rejected them.

v. 2–6. In these verses the poet describes the wretched condition of those who had been deprived of their ancestral possessions in the country districts, and had therefore to purchase what had

Our houses unto aliens.
3 We are orphans and fatherless,
Our mothers are as widows.
4 We have drunken our water for money;
Our wood [a] is sold unto us.
5 Our pursuers are upon our necks:
We are weary, and have no rest.
6 We have given the hand to the Egyptians,

---

[a] Heb. *cometh for price.*

been their own, their water and their wood, either from the new possessors, or perhaps by paying a tax to the Babylonian governor (cf. i. 11). They were orphans in the sense that their fathers had been taken into exile, so that while their mothers were not literally widows, they were no better off than if they were actually so ('our mothers are as widows').

3. mothers: not a figurative expression for the cities of Judah, but literally meant, like all the expressions in this passage. Cheyne's emendation 'citadels' (*'arm^{e}nōthēynū*) yields a rather better assonance, but at the expense of the parallelism.

5. This is a difficult verse. The first line is strangely expressed. Frequently it has been rendered 'On our necks are we pursued;' we must suppose the meaning to be, our pursuers are hard at our heels. But the reference to pursuit is strange. The speakers belong apparently to those left behind in the land. Who should pursue them? We might think of them either as being chased out of the land, but broken wretches such as they were could hardly be politically dangerous. Or they might be attempting to escape from their evil lot, with pursuers hard after them to bring them back. This would agree with 6, but is otherwise difficult. Had the fugitives been runaway slaves, hot pursuit would have been intelligible; but this seems not to have been the case. The reference to pursuit is accordingly suspicious both in itself and the form in which it is expressed. The text is apparently corrupt. The word rendered 'upon' is identical, apart from the pointing, with the word for 'yoke.' It is probable that originally both words stood in the text, though we might simply alter the pointing and read 'the yoke of our neck' (so Ball), and that we should alter the verb. What is required is some verb expressive of the grievous pressure of the yoke, and Ball's suggestion 'they made heavy' approximates to the probable original: 'The yoke on our neck they have made heavy;' this harmonizes well with the second line.

6. The reference is not to earlier political alliances made with

And to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.
Our fathers have sinned, and are not; 7
And we have borne their iniquities.
Servants rule over us: 8
There is none to deliver us out of their hand.
We get our bread with the peril of our lives 9

Egypt and Assyria in the past, for this does not suit the intention of their action. Rather the point is that they have wandered into these lands to gain a livelihood by servitude, which they could not gain at home. That they should go into Egypt was natural; but the mention of Assyria causes surprise, both on account of its distance and the fact that it brought them nearer the land of their rulers. Budde thinks that originally Edom may have stood here; we should in that case explain the language in the light of the fact that the Edomites had pushed into Jewish territory (see note on iv. 21). Ball, with comparatively slight changes, eliminates the names of peoples; but also inverts the order of 5 and 6. He renders:

> 'To adversaries we submitted, Saying we shall be satisfied with bread.
> The yoke of our neck they made heavy, We toil, and no rest is allowed us.'

A rather more radical revision, though the emendations suggested are still comparatively slight, is proposed by Cheyne for the whole passage 6–10 (*Enc. Bib.* 2700). The introduction of the 'Ishmaelites' is textually more difficult than that of the 'Arabians;' and the reconstruction is bound up to some extent, though not vitally, with the author's 'North Arabian theory.' This verse he renders:

> 'We have surrendered to the Misrites,
> We have become subject to the Ishmaelites.'

7. See the discussion in the note on Jer. xxxi. 29. The poet, however, does not deny that the sufferers had participated in the sin (16); yet he traces the punishment primarily to the sins of the fathers, who had died and thus passed beyond the reach of punishment before their sin had received its due penalty. The penalty had therefore to be exacted from their successors.

8. By 'servants' or 'slaves' the poet means probably some of the minor officials, who may have been formerly slaves. Oettli compares the case of 'Tobiah the servant' (Neh. ii. 10, 19). Cheyne reads 'Arabians' (*'ărābîm* for *'ăbādîm*).

9. The general sense is plain: they earn their living at the risk of death from the Bedawin. But it is not clear whether the precise point is that they get in such harvests as they are able to

Because of the sword of the wilderness.
10 Our skin is [a] black like an oven
Because of the burning heat of famine.
11 They ravished the women in Zion,
The maidens in the cities of Judah.
12 Princes were hanged up by their hand:

[a] †Or, *hot*

---

raise, or that they tend the flocks and herds entrusted to them, in either case in peril of a sudden raid by the robbers from the desert. In favour of the former are the words 'we bring in our bread' (so literally), 'bread' being used in the sense of 'corn;' in favour of the latter the fact that they apparently had no lands of their own to cultivate.

the sword of the wilderness. The phrase has no parallel in the Old Testament. Various emendations have been suggested; the best is probably Cheyne's 'Arabian' for 'sword,' which involves a change of one consonant. He renders:

'We bring in our corn with peril of our lives
Because of the Arabian of the desert.'

(*Enc. Bib.* 2700). We may compare Jer. iii. 2.

10. The hunger from which they suffer brings on a raging fever. Cheyne's emendation of this verse gives a good sense, but requires too much change in the text.

11, 12. It is very hard to believe that the reference is to anything but the outrages which commonly accompany the capture of a city, when the soldiery have licence to satiate their lust and their greed. It is possible that the poet has in mind indignities and tortures inflicted on the hapless remnant in Palestine. But the reference to 'princes' does not favour this. On the other hand, a sudden transition from the situation hitherto described, to the incidents which attended the sack of the city is violent; and Budde believes on this ground that these verses originally formed no part of the poem.

hanged up by their hand. If the pronoun refers to the enemy, whose misdeeds are mentioned in 11, the sense may be that they impaled the princes; whether before or after death is uncertain. It is possible also to take the pronoun as referring to the princes; the meaning being that they were hung up by the hand. Such a form of torture was by no means uncommon; we may compare with it the hanging up by the thumbs, familiar in sea-stories, especially stories of pirates. The present writer inclines to this view; and suspects that this form of torture may have been

The faces of elders were not honoured.
The young men bare the mill, 13
And the children stumbled under the wood.
The elders have ceased from the gate, 14
The young men from their music.
The joy of our heart is ceased; 15
Our dance is turned into mourning.
The crown is fallen from our head: 16
Woe unto us! for we have sinned.
For this our heart is faint; 17
For these things our eyes are dim;
For the mountain of Zion, which is desolate; 18
The [a] foxes walk upon it.
Thou, O LORD, [b] abidest for ever; 19
Thy throne is from generation to generation.

[a] †Or, *jackals* [b] Or, *sittest* as king

---

applied to princes to force them to disclose where their wealth was concealed.

elders: cf. iv. 16.

13. The young men have to carry about the heavy millstones, while the lads stagger under the load of firewood they are forced to bear. Ball reads 'Nobles endured to grind and princes stumbled under logs.'

14. See notes on ii. 10.

16. The crown: i.e. in a figurative sense, our glory and prosperity.

17. The R.V. by its punctuation takes the reference in 'For this' and 'For these things' to be to the desolation of Zion mentioned in 18 as the climax of Judah's woes. This view is probably correct; though some considerations favour a reference to what has gone before.

18. That the Temple mount has become the haunt of jackals shows that we are some time removed from its destruction.

19. Now the poet resumes the plea with God, with which the poem opens. While Yahweh's earthly home, where He sat enthroned on the cherubim, is destroyed, He lives above the reach of change, and His heavenly throne abides throughout the generations.

20 Wherefore dost thou forget us for ever,
And forsake us so long time?
21 Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned;
Renew our days as of old.
22 [a] But thou hast utterly rejected us,
Thou art very wroth against us.

---

[a] †Or, *Unless thou . . .* and *art &c.*

---

20. Seeing then the permanence of His dominion, why should He forget His people, when He could without effort restore them?

21. See note on Jer. xxxi. 18; but here the language seems to be meant in a spiritual sense.

22. The meaning is probably more correctly given in the margin. The poet's tone is more tentative than the R.V. text suggests; he means God surely will not entirely reject His people, and for ever maintain His alienation from them. In the synagogues, it is true, 21 was repeated after 22, that the reading might not end on the sad note of 22. A similar custom prevailed, with better reason, in Isaiah, Malachi, and Ecclesiastes.

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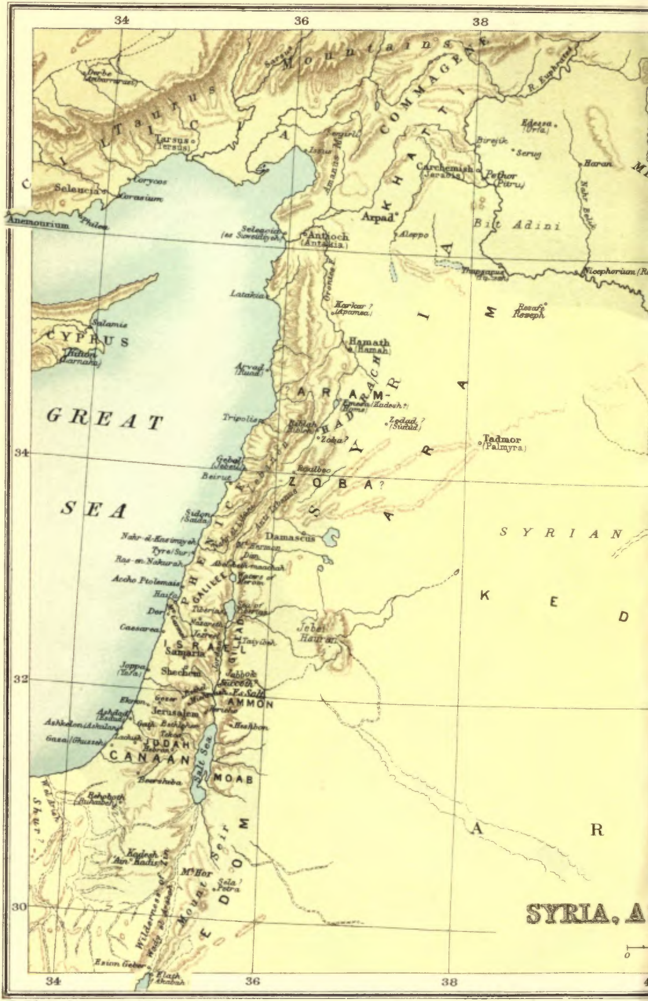
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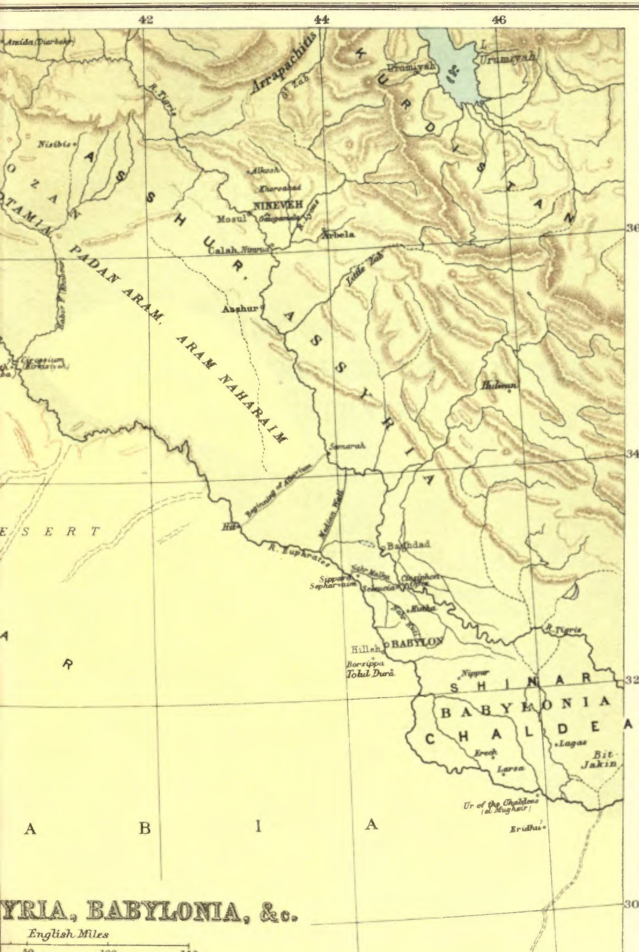
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The Century Bible

A MODERN COMMENTARY

Ezekiel

INTRODUCTION
REVISED VERSION WITH NOTES
ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

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Aug. 591.	viii. 1.[1]	Jerusalem's Sin. Second Cycle of Threats.
Aug. 590.	xx. 1.	Third Cycle of Threats.
Jan. 587.	xxiv. 1.	The End at Hand!

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Jan. 586.	xxix. 1.	Oracle against Egypt.
Mar. 586.	xxx. 20.	Oracle against Egypt.
May 586.	xxxi. 1.	Oracle against Egypt.

DIVISION 2. CHAPTERS XXXIII–XXXIX. THE PURIFICATION OF ISRAEL.

Jan. 585.	xxxiii. 21.	Individual Responsibility. The Restoration and Final Deliverance.
[Mar. 585.	xxvi. 1.[1]	Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Tyre.
Feb. 584.	xxxii. 1.	Dirge over Egypt.
Feb. 584.	xxxii. 17.[1]	Dirge over Egypt.]

DIVISION 3. CHAPTERS XL–XLVIII. THE ORDERING OF THE NATION.

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Note. In the first half of the book the order of chapters is strictly chronological; in the group of prophecies against the nations the order is broken by chap. xxvi; xxxiii. 21 is naturally placed at the head of the next group. xxix. 17 ff. is inserted immediately after the prophecy which it corrects. The subject headings belong to the sections intervening between the dates actually given.

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[1] See note *ad loc.*

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

EZEKIEL

INTRODUCTION

THE PROPHECIES OF EZEKIEL

INTRODUCTION

I. EZEKIEL'S WORK AND CHARACTER.

THE book of Ezekiel is generally considered to be one of the most difficult in the Bible; it is certainly one of the most interesting. At the centre of the development of Israelite history and religion stand the prophets; at the centre of the goodly fellowship of the prophets stands Ezekiel. The religious thought and activity of Israel is full of contrasts; the contrast between prophet and priest, the messages which they brought to the nation and the principles for which they stood; the contrast between their ideals for the nation and for the individual, and the consequent differences in their thoughts of God, the soul, and the world; the contrast between the speaker and the writer, and between the preacher who directs himself to the needs of the present, and the seer who projects his gaze to the day of the final consummation of God's righteousness; the contrast between the philosophic interpretation of national history and the inspired outbursts of religious emotion;—all these contrasts meet in Ezekiel, at once priest and prophet, inspirer of a nation and pastor of individual souls, the preacher to expectant audiences and the writer for future generations. Keenly conscious of the needs of the present, he elaborates a surprisingly detailed plan for an ideal service of God, and at the same time, plunging still deeper into the future, he forms for all future ages their conception of the final judgement. In each case Ezekiel marks the transition from one principle to the other, and in each case the of the weird description of the underworld in chapter xxxii. With Ezekiel the passion does not always lie on the surface; he checks it, struggles to keep the upper hand, so to speak, proceeds as if he were quite calm; and then he is suddenly mastered by the almost conquered foe and carried away.

The priestly and ritualistic element in his nature, strange to say, only makes this passion the more intense; for in him, as we shall see, sin does not merely rouse a moral indignation, as in Isaiah or Juvenal or Carlyle; it fills him with a sense of almost physical repulsion; with a loathing and horror that control for the time his whole being, and inspire him with a kind of fury towards those who practice or even tolerate it; a fury whose expression sometimes all but oversteps what are to us the limits even of decency, and equalled only by the 'sacred rage' of Dante.

This leads us naturally to another side of Ezekiel's nature, his sensitiveness. Here too we find the same only half successful attempt at self-repression. Like Jeremiah, he must contemplate and foretell the ruin of all he loves best on earth; like Jeremiah, he must steel himself against the frowns and angry remonstrances of his hearers; unlike Jeremiah, he feels himself forbidden to express his grief. To regret the fate of such sinners as the idolatrous remnant in Jerusalem would seem treason to Yahweh; yet he cannot altogether restrain his sorrow[1]; to his keen Israelite patriotism the fall of Jerusalem is as the death of his own wife; yet when his wife dies, he must sit paralysed and silent[2]. Like the other prophets he knows that his message will constantly be rejected; more than that, his prophecies do not always come literally true. He has to address audiences who gather before him simply for the aesthetic pleasure of listening to his rhapsodies[3]; and there can be few things more pathetic than his references to the opening of his mouth, when, after months and years of misunderstanding and contempt, his words are at last treated with respect[1].

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[1] ix. 8. [2] xxiv. 17. [3] xxxiii. 32.

Ezekiel was a Puritan; yet, like Milton, he has all a poet's sense of things; he loves a picturesque and effective catalogue as much as Milton or Homer. The descriptions of the shameless careers of Israel and Judah as loose and profligate women are not more remarkable for their vigour and passion than for their freshness and incisiveness of detail. The roll-call of the allies of Tyre, and the parade of the armies of the dead in the underworld, show precisely the same sense of the individual in subordination to the whole; the scenes of idolatrous worship in the temple, as Ezekiel describes them, possess a vividness which only a master of expression would have flung into so few words; the details of the theophany at the beginning of the book, as contrasted with the vagueness in the corresponding passages in Isaiah and Jeremiah, are certainly very much more than otiose elaboration; and the last nine chapters, with their persistent emphasis on small and accurate measurements, are felt after a time to be the carefully chosen means for producing a total impression of clearness and artistic insight, perhaps otherwise unattainable.

To this must be added an almost more fascinating element in the problem of Ezekiel's character. It would appear that there runs through all the prophet's activities, at least in the earlier period, a strain of mental abnormality—perhaps of actual malady. By some writers, notably by Klostermann, this has been supposed to be a form of catalepsy. The various arguments in support of this view will be discussed in the notes. Probably Ezekiel was no more a cataleptic than Paul; with equal probability he was what would now be called a 'psychical' subject—and, as such, liable to trances—and perhaps a clairvoyant. In any case, he would appear to be gifted with those powers of passing 'over the threshold' which a great many of us possess to some slight degree, perhaps without discovering it, and which he himself, living before the days of strict medical investigation or nomenclature, could only describe by the categories at his command[1].

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[1] xxiv. 27, xxxiii. 22.

Ezekiel may be said to have given us the only 'work of art' in the Old Testament. As Smend says, the whole book is the 'logical development of a series of thoughts on a carefully elaborated and schematic plan; nothing can be removed without disarranging the whole.' The Hebrew genius, great and remarkable as it is, can hardly be called artistic, from the point of view of symmetry. It is greatest in expressing the passionate feelings of the moment; we see it at its best and most characteristic in some of the Psalms, or in the lyrical outbursts in Job or in the Prophets; sustained feeling is seldom met with. There are indeed long passages of fine rhetoric or narrative to be found in Deuteronomy or in Kings; but the passages are for the most part complete in themselves; the inspiration pulses for a time, and then appears to cease. Ezekiel is free from this intermittentness. It is true that he occasionally rises to great heights, and then falls again; but on closer inspection there is always reason, both for the rise and for the fall; each has a special fitness in relation to its context. More than any other Hebrew writer, Ezekiel is the architect of his composition.

Again, all Hebrew literature evidences a distinct fondness for compilation and a reverence for what is written. That the historical books are compilations is well known; and it is probable that the same tendency has had very much to do with the present form of most parts of the Old Testament. Ezekiel is in this respect completely different, alike from the Prophets and the Law. Hence the almost entire absence of critical questions in connexion with his work. Indeed, an analysis of the structure of the book shows compilation to be out of the question. Not only is the style unmistakable; the book as a whole falls into two equal parts, each of which is divided and subdivided, every part preparing for what immediately follows, and reminding us of the ordered symmetry of a cathedral. Cornill and others have rightly laid stress on the symmetry of the whole book, as striking as that of the ideal temple with whose description the book closes; a description which Cornill has suggestively called the spire by which the whole cathedral is crowned.[1]

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[1] See iii. 12, 22, &c., and cp. Virgil, *Aeneid* vi. 79 'tanto magis ille fatigat Os rabidum,' &c. Independently of the visions in i–iii and xl five ecstasies are mentioned, viii. 1–16, xi. 1–13, xxiv. 1, xxxiii 22, xxxvii. 1.

It is now necessary to say comparatively little about Ezekiel's style. This is just what we should expect from what has been already observed. 'Le style, c'est de l'homme même.' This is pre-eminently true of Ezekiel. Few epithets have been thought too severe for it;—formal and even formulistic, turgid and overloaded, lacking the fire of Isaiah, the stern brevity of Amos, the pathos of Hosea or Jeremiah, the grandeur of the second Isaiah; has he, some have even asked, any poetic power at all? Smend, who finds him at times an 'infelicitous imitator of older prophets,' sees but little inspiration even in Ezekiel's characteristic dirge-songs. But there can be no doubt that his literary powers are very marked. The style is imaginative in the highest degree. Doubtless an English reader may find some difficulty in fully realizing this; yet the finest imagery in the Revelation is borrowed from Ezekiel. The vision of Yahweh's chariot growing in clearness and complexity out of the storm cloud in the north, the picture of Nebuchadnezzar at the cross-roads debating whether to attack Judah or Ammon, the lament of the nations over Tyre, the description of the dried-up bones of the slaughtered army, are only examples of a style which unites terseness and fullness with remarkable skill. True, he has a peculiar manner of saying the same thing twice over, directly, and in a figure[1]; and there are many passages in which we find a quite needless redundancy of expression; this, however, may be owing to the faulty state of a text acknowledged to be in places exceedingly corrupt[2]. In any case, in point of style, as in so much else, Ezekiel stands midway in the development of the thought and activity of his people. He must be read in bulk; but when this justice is done him, he will be found to stretch out one hand to the melodious snatches and emotional outbursts of the earlier literature, and with the other to touch the reflective and leisurely compositions of later Judaism; and for his own part he exhibits a special mastery over the lament or dirge[3], a species of writing wherein his passion and his tenderness, his wide vocabulary and his keen sense of proportion find their fittest vehicle.

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[1] R. G. Moulton finds in the Old Testament a literary characteristic, whereby the most important part of a section is placed in the precise centre, like the keystone of an arch. This may certainly be observed in Ezekiel. Moulton finds the same principle also in Shakespeare's plays, where the turning-point invariably occurs in the middle scene of the middle act: see his *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist*, p. 186.

We should be unjust to Ezekiel if we did not mention at this point another characteristic; his surprisingly varied use of simile and allegory, parable and symbol. Figurative expressions and passages, more or less elaborate, abound in the Bible, as in all oriental literature[4]; they are especially common in prophecy, where again and again an emblem, a symbolic action, a parable, or a vision, is made as it were the text of a prophetic discourse. But Ezekiel's use of the emblem is far more elaborate than that of his predecessors. Now he carries out some lengthy symbolical action—so lengthy that we wonder if it was ever really 'acted' at all; now he takes a popular proverb and gives a dramatic turn to its interpretation; now he snatches a sword and makes it almost tell his tale for him; now he gives us a long and picturesque narrative, only allowing his hearers, as did the Prophet of Nazareth, to gather the moral from the general tenor of the story and a few pregnant words of application flung into its centre; and when, at the end of the book, he describes his final vision of the new temple and city, he leaves us in doubt—such a doubt as he loved to rouse—whether, in his own mind, what he describes is to be literally fulfilled, or is only a shadow of what is really indescribable.

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[1] Cf. xxviii. 1–10, 11–19, xxx. 20–26, xxxi. 1–14; xxxvii. 1–14 is an elaboration of xxxvi. 26, 27.

[2] See pp. 43–7.

[3] See p. 161.

[4] How much, for example, is figurative, and how much literal, in Omar Khayyám?

What is really indescribable;—this is the burden of the whole prophecy. For Ezekiel lives in a world of thoughts that 'break through language and escape.' The precise and scrupulous priest, who will not have his altar base an inch either more or less than a perfect square, sees his country as the centre and subject of a drama of punishment, recovery, and repentance, before whose awful and divine glory the mind reels in dismay. 'He loved the symbol, not for itself alone, but for the majesty which it contained, the hidden light which it guarded. It is in this region alone that he seems to wear an absorbed and pontifical air, not with the false sacerdotal desire to enhance personal impressiveness and private dignity, through the ministry of divine powers and holy secrets, but with the unconscious emotion of one whose eyes behold great wonders enacting themselves upon the bodiless air, which the dull and contemptuous may not discern.'[1]

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[1] A. C. Benson, on Walter Pater. Schiller wished to learn Hebrew that he might read Ezekiel in the original; Victor Hugo places Ezekiel, with Homer, Aeschylus, Juvenal, and others, in 'the avenue of the immovable giants of the human mind.'

II. In Exile.

Ezekiel's central position is equally noteworthy when we turn to the historical conditions of his life. The exile was the period in which the Jewish nation seemed to stand between two worlds, 'one dead, one powerless to be born.' That what was best in the old revived, and that the new really did come to the birth, was the result of Ezekiel's activity. Even the other great prophet of the exile, vastly more familiar as he is to most people to-day, had far less influence, as far as we can see, either on the Jews of the exile, or on their successors who returned to Palestine, than the exiled priest who lived among them by the river Chebar.

Rightly to appreciate the significance of Ezekiel's work, it must be remembered that the exile was the centre and not the end of the history of Israel. There has never been a more crowded and catastrophic period in the history of the world than the two centuries which begin with the seige of Samaria and end with the first return of the Jews from Babylon[1]. In those two centuries the positions of all the great powers of the ancient world were fundamentally changed, and Israel and Judah were of course unable to escape the general disasters.

The northern kingdom fell at the very beginning of the period. When Samaria was captured in 722, Judah was already a vassal state of Assyria. Her bold stroke for liberty under Hezekiah left her safe, but terribly impoverished[2]. Before the long reign of his successor had ended, the days of Assyria were numbered. Perhaps under Isaiah's influence, Hezekiah had carried through some measures of religious reform; during Manasseh's reign these were swept away before a flood-tide of idolatry and foreign worship; and the few faithful souls who remained became convinced that a far more drastic reformation was needed, in order to make such horrors impossible. Early in the reign of Josiah (621) a scheme or law[1] embodying their ideas was brought to light and at once accepted as authoritative or Mosaic; the local sanctuaries ceased to exist, and their officiating priests were brought to serve in subordinate capacities in Jerusalem[2].

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[1] From 725 to 537 B. C.

[2] See Whitehouse, Century Bible, *Commentary on Isaiah*, pp. 25, 26 (footnote).

The hopes founded on these measures were soon disappointed. In a vain attempt to preserve the newly purified land from the Egyptian foreigner, Josiah perished at Megiddo in 608; and there now began in Jerusalem a period of religious fanaticism and fierce longing for political independence. After the three months' reign of Jehoahaz, Necho placed his elder brother, Eliakim or Jehoiakim, on the throne. For eleven years, in spite of the stern warnings of Jeremiah, he played off Egypt against Babylon; then, after a sharp resistance, the city fell, three months after Jehoiakim's death, and with his son, Jehoiachin, the flower of the nation was carried away into Babylon[3]. Among the captives went Ezekiel, a young priest, as it would seem, thirty or forty years old.

The city with the remaining population was spared, and Zedekiah, another son of Josiah, was placed on the throne. But the men who surrounded the new king had learnt nothing. In vain Jeremiah reminded them that the glory of Yahweh was quite independent of the fate of Jerusalem. With a bravery as surprising as it was mistaken they carried on the old policy for another ten years; and then the crash came. Egypt once more proved herself a broken reed; the city, after being invested for a year and a half, was stormed; Zedekiah, after a vain attempt at flight, taken prisoner and blinded, and the whole territory practically stripped of its inhabitants.

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[1] This law forms the kernel of our book of Deuteronomy.

[2] 2 Kings xxiii. 9: see also note on xliv. 10.

[3] See 2 Kings xxiv. 14, 16; contrast Jer. lii. 28–30.

The doom of Judah was now complete. And it was more severe than the word Exile might suggest to us. For exile meant separation not only from the land, but from the god of the land. The average Hebrew, it would appear, never thought of Yahweh as being actually confined to Palestine; he came to the help of his people from Sinai or from Paran; he could show his power over the nations of the earth; but his worship was confined to Palestine. There were his altars and high places; all other lands were polluted, unclean. For those who had accepted the centralization of worship at Jerusalem (that is, for all the best spirits in the nation) the logical impossibility of drawing near to Yahweh in a foreign land was even clearer. Worse than this, the whole world had now seen that Yahweh was as unable to protect his own land and people as were the other gods. 'Has our faith,' the Hebrews would ask themselves, 'been after all a mistake? Were all the promises given to our fathers mere delusions? Was it for nothing that Josiah turned to seek Yahweh's face? Surely we are not so much worse than the men of earlier times; it is for their sins that we are being punished. Is not Yahweh as unjust as he is weak?' Doubtless such questions as these were asked by the first band of exiles. But while Jerusalem was still standing an answer was readily suggested; Yahweh would still be worshipped by some of the people at least, and sooner or later the clouds would be dispersed and the exiles would return. Jeremiah wrote to them from Jerusalem that it would be two generations at least before they would return[1]; Ezekiel told them that instead of the clouds dispersing the storm would break; but they could not grasp the new idea that locality could make no difference to the power and presence of Yahweh. Their very trust in Yahweh made them turn a deaf ear to Ezekiel and Jeremiah alike.

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[1] Jer. xxix. 10.

Naturally, when the storm did break, their faith was shaken. What was left for them? Sharing the downfall of their neighbours, with all patriotic pride in the glories of the house of David destroyed, robbed of the practice and the consolations of religion itself, would the remnant of Judah become merged in the surrounding heathenism, as the remnant of the northern kingdom had been a century before? This danger was all the more pressing for another reason. The conditions of the life in Babylon were by no means hard. The exile was not a captivity; it meant rather the single restriction that the Jews could not go back to Palestine. They were allowed to form communities of their own, and enjoyed a considerable degree of social freedom.

Of late years discoveries in Mesopotamia have thrown a flood of light on Babylonian society and commerce[1]. Whether we form our opinions from the code of Hammurabi, drawn up nearly seventeen centuries before Ezekiel's time, or from the business documents and letters of Nebuchadnezzar's empire, we find a civilization highly organized and strikingly modern. The government of the country was similar to that of France towards the end of the *ancien régime*; the high temple officials divided the financial activities of the country with the large banking houses; noble ladies gave themselves up to the service of religion, like the high-born abbesses and prioresses of the middle ages, and apparently with no more suggestion of immorality than they. Class distinctions were carefully preserved, though the middle classes were constantly claiming the titles and privileges of gentility; legal settlements and contracts were almost as cumbrous as they are to-day; resident aliens easily became citizens and rested under no disabilities. True, slavery was a universal institution, and a certain barbarity and contempt for human life ran through the laws; yet punishments were not more cruel than they were in Europe 200 years ago, and a modern Englishman—were the difficulty of language surmounted—would probably find himself at least as much at home in Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon as in the England of Henry VIII[1].

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[1] See especially Johns, *Babylonian Laws, Contracts, and Letters.*

Into all this 'modern' life the Jews seem to have entered readily. In a few years, Jehoiachin was brought back to court under Nebuchadnezzar's son, Evil-merodach[2]; and life was certainly much easier for the Jews under Nebuchadnezzar than for the northern exiles under Sargon. Moreover, some of the exiles tried to keep up the cultus of Yahweh by practices which true religion could not but abhor[3]. Israel had assimilated herself with fatal ease to the civilization of Canaan in the old days; what was there to prevent a corresponding, but far more disastrous, assimilation now[4]? Only one thing: the presence of Ezekiel. Jeremiah had been left in Palestine, and then dragged away into Egypt; nor did he ever exert a wide influence among the exiles or in Jerusalem. At first sight Ezekiel would seem to have been even less fitted to be the saviour of society and the sponsor of a new order of things. Did he not share the views of the people on sacrifice and ritual? Did he not also believe in the holiness of Palestine and the impossibility of worship on any other soil? Did not he lack that quick sympathy and altogether human love for his country which beat so strongly in the heart of Jeremiah? Was not the statesman and the patriot in him lost in the ecclesiastic? Did not his mental malady unfit him for the task of founding the new dispensation in the affections of his people?

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[1] It is noteworthy that Ezekiel, unlike his predecessors (cf. Jer. l, li), has not a word to say against Babylon. This may be partly due to considerations of prudence; but partly, no doubt, to a recognition of Nebuchadnezzar's high character and firm rule. The pretence of the lament over Babylon in Rev. xviii is borrowed from Ezekiel's funeral ode over Tyre. There is no direct mention of Babylon in Isa. xl–lxvi.

[2] 2 Kings xxv. 27. [3] xx. 31, 33.

[4] Further light is thrown on the condition of the Jews in Babylonia by a remarkable discovery of Aramaic business documents at Assouan (see note on xxix. 10) in 1904, dating from 471–411 B.C. and referring to members of a Jewish community living there and in Elephantine, who would seem to be the descendants of the Jewish refugees in Egypt mentioned in Jer. xli. 17–18, xlii–xliv. These Jews have their own 'chapel' or, as Schürer strongly prefers, 'altar'; they intermarry with Egyptians, and they swear not only by Yahweh but by Egyptian gods as well. That they were commercially and socially prosperous and enjoyed religious toleration is clear.

All this might appear from the first reading of his book. But his apparent limitations were his real strength. So long as Jerusalem was still standing, he was opposed, as Jeremiah was opposed in Jerusalem; he felt himself oppressed and confined; no one would believe him; he was 'dumb.' When its fall became a certainty to his neighbours, we notice at once a sense of relief; the 'dumbness' was removed. And now, unlike Jeremiah, he could show that he felt the people's problems in the people's way. The soil of Palestine was holy; but they had polluted it, and it could only be hallowed by the uprooting of the old national life. Sacrifices were necessary: but the exile was the indispensable preparation for the institution of sacrifices which could never be prostituted to false gods. The temple was indeed the centre of the national life; but the old temple had been misused till it was worse than one of the high places; its fall prepared the way for the true temple in which Yahweh could dwell undisturbed.

Further, the heathen had indeed exulted over what they imagined was Yahweh's defeat; but this would simply show them the restoration of a repentant and purified Israel, and reveal Yahweh's real character and grandeur[1]. All that had happened or would happen was simply 'in maiorem gloriam Dei.' Once Jerusalem had fallen, all this became plain. For Ezekiel, and for all true Jewish piety, the fundamental truth was not the union between Yahweh and his people, but the majesty of Yahweh himself. The fall of Jerusalem placed this majesty in its true light. If it existed at all, it existed not for one nation or land, but for all nations, and for the whole earth. This having been shown, it only remained for his enemies (who had really been working Yahweh's will) to be removed, the programme to be carried out, and the ideal to be attained.

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[1] Cf. the constantly recurring formula, 'They shall know that I am Yahweh.'

III. PROPHET AND PRIEST.

What is Ezekiel's place in the history of Hebrew prophecy? The approaching ruin of Judah forced both Jeremiah and Ezekiel to face two problems, both of which Jeremiah dismissed somewhat rapidly, while Ezekiel had to meet their full force. The first was this; if Israel is destroyed root and branch, what then is to become of Yahweh? To the thought of the time, a people was as necessary to its god as the god to his people. If Yahweh were supreme, as the prophets had claimed, and as Judah believed, surely he would not share in the common disgrace of the gods of the heathen. The answer which both Jeremiah and Ezekiel gave was that the real Israel would not perish. Yahweh would pour out his spirit, and would give a new covenant to his people, a covenant which would be unlike the old one in that it would not be broken. This conception Ezekiel elaborates in numerous passages which all point to the magnificent prophecy of chapter xxxvii. That the nation will permanently remain in exile is unthinkable. Yahweh has brought them thus low in order to show his power to vindicate his own law in the eyes of the world, 'that they may know that I am Yahweh'; but he will destroy the hostile nations, and then bring back his chosen people—albeit a diminished remnant—to their own land; he will thus prove before the world his power to save them. But this mercy of his toward them will no longer fill them with the false confidence which puffed up the men who were left in Jerusalem after the first deportation. They must learn that their restoration is not in the least due to themselves or to any special favour which Yahweh has for them; the one effect of his goodness on them will be to fill them with a deep loathing for their former sins. The goodness of God will lead them to repentance [1]. Thus Yahweh's power even over the hearts of his people will be manifested; and if this should seem impossible in the case of exiles, who, as they felt, were no more than the dried-up skeletons of a slain host, the word of prophecy could call Yahweh's own breath of life into the bones, and with the nation thus risen from the dead, the new covenant would be completed.

After these three vindications, only one more is needful or possible. The surrounding foes of Israel will have already recognized in their own calamities the majesty of Yahweh; now the whole earth must see it. Accordingly the mysterious nations of the far north are summoned to sweep over the lands till Israel is reached; there, on the mountains of Israel, they fall, by an extermination as complete as befell the Midianites before Gideon, as secret as that which overthrew the host of Sennacherib; and for months Israel will be engaged in burying the slain. Thus Yahweh will be acknowledged as supreme by the whole earth, and the sons of Israel will at last be able to worship aright, none daring to make them afraid.

How far is Ezekiel here making an advance on his predecessors? That they were thorough and complete monotheists cannot for a moment be denied; they knew no gods beside Yahweh; but what was in them an instinct, a conviction to be overheard rather than heard explicitly, Ezekiel develops into a reasoned doctrine [2]. For the vindication of Yahweh's honour, as is natural, he displays a special zeal. His teaching, not only of the universal power of Yahweh, but of its future universal recognition, is his own. It must be noted, however, that he leaves room for further progress ; he has not made the discovery that revolutionized the life of Saul of Tarsus. The Gentiles are to recognize Yahweh ; but that they can serve him, or be accepted by him, Ezekiel never suspects, nor does he provide for such a consummation ; the law is for Israel, and Israel alone.

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[1] Rom. ii. 4.

[2] Cf. Isa. ii. 2-4; Mic. iv. 1-3 (contrast verse 5).

The second problem was this : 'Are we so much worse than previous generations ? Surely we are being punished for their sins ; the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' Jeremiah contents himself with saying[1] that if this has been so in the past, it will not be so in the future. Ezekiel goes further into the matter, and so has gained the title of the father of individualism. His treatment of the subject is highly important[2], and here too he stands midway between earlier and later points of view. His silence is as instructive as his teaching. Unlike Jeremiah, he repudiates altogether the idea that one man can be punished for another ; it is the soul which sins that shall die. Yahweh is not baulked in his desire to punish the guilty, and so compelled to execute a clumsy vengeance on the innocent. All souls belong to him ; the most scrupulous goodness in the father cannot protect a wicked son ; nor can a previous life of goodness atone for evil, nor a previous life of evil prevent the reward of subsequent turning to Yahweh.

This is stated by Ezekiel in terms of almost mathematical precision ; yet we shall notice that throughout his writings he by no means shakes himself free from the older and national as opposed to the newer and individual point of view. Like his predecessors, he regards Israel as a single moral personality to be either rewarded or punished. The individuals whom he sees practising their idolatrous abominations are typical of the whole nation; it is a nation which he indicts in the terrible sixth and twenty-third chapters; and it is a restored nation, though freed from many of its national duties and responsibilities, for which he legislates in the last nine chapters of the book. We do no dishonour to the prophets when we say that they constantly failed to draw out the consequences of the principles they announced. Ezekiel went further than his predecessors; he saw what was involved in the justice of Yahweh, which would punish no one who had not deserved to be punished. Yet at the very moment when he went beyond his predecessors he returned to their side, and left the full working out of his own principle for the future.

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[1] xxxi. 30.

[2] See pp. 154, 155.

Like all the prophets, Ezekiel turns his attention to foreign nations. In a series of nine chapters, in the centre of his book, he predicts the fall of seven of the most powerful of them[1]. This raises another of the many problems which the study of Ezekiel suggests. In what sense can Ezekiel be said to foretell the future? These nine chapters are full of predictions,—far more so than any that precede. Were the predictions fulfilled? The answer is that they were fulfilled only in the most general and vague sense. To announce that the neighbouring tribes would fall as Judah was falling needed little political penetration and no supernatural illumination; nor does Ezekiel in dealing with their fate give any details by which some special source of knowledge could have been proved. When we turn to the two great powers of Egypt and Tyre, to which he devotes some of his finest and most impressive writing, his predictions, if they have been verified at all, have not been verified in his sense. For Egypt he prophesied complete destruction.

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[1] Babylon is omitted from the list: see note on p. 16.

Pharaoh was to go down with all his multitude into the underworld. As a matter of fact, Egypt rather remarkably escaped the destruction with which Babylon seemed again and again to threaten her, and indeed preserved some sort of national existence into Roman times. In the case of Tyre, Ezekiel lived long enough to see that the fate with which he had threatened her was not to be accomplished; she resisted the siege of Nebuchadnezzar much as 250 years later she resisted Alexander of Macedon. As it appears in the latest of his prophecies[1], Ezekiel frankly confesses his mistake[2].

Later on, as we have said, Ezekiel foretells a great irruption from the north. In its general features, his description reminds us of the Scythian invasion of c. 630. It never took place, and the literal fulfilment of the last act of the drama of this irruption, as foretold by Ezekiel, would of course be impossible[3]. But surely, it will be urged, Ezekiel foretold the restoration of the Jews, and it took place. This is true; that exile from the promised land could be perpetual none of the prophets could for a moment imagine; but just as little did the restoration take place as Ezekiel or his fellow prophets expected. Jeremiah says very little about the return that is at all definite; he predicts that its duration will last, in round numbers, seventy years; as a matter of fact, only fifty-three years elapsed between the fall of Jerusalem and the first return. Ezekiel foretells a return of prosperity which certainly was not realized, and a spiritual change of which even Ezra and Nehemiah saw very little sign; while his belief that the two kingdoms would once more be definitely united in one nation was as little fulfilled as were the roseate visions of the second Isaiah. Those who actually did return could only continue to reverence the prophecies as inspired, by throwing their fulfilment further and further into the future, that is, by treating prophecy more and more as apocalypse.

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[1] xxix. 17 ff.

[2] As we now know (see p. 16, note) Jeremiah's prophecy of the destruction of the Jewish colony in Upper Egypt (xliv. 12 ff.) was not fulfilled.

[3] xxxvii, xxxviii.

The truth is that the distinction so familiar to us between actual fulfilment of prophecy and the reverse had little place in the mind of the prophets. Certain great principles they knew as well as we do, perhaps better; certain deep convictions about Yahweh's justice and vengeance and loving kindness they proclaimed with increasing devotion; the applications of those convictions and principles they had to express in the language which was at their own command and intelligible to their hearers. That prophecies were fulfilled Ezekiel had no doubt, and the second Isaiah appealed to their fulfilment as a recognized fact. The announcement of the vanity of patriotic hopes in the stability of Judah, or the downfall of a mighty empire like Assyria or Babylon, could not fail to impress those who saw such announcements to be correct; but to read off the pages of history beforehand, in order to gain credence or attention, was no more the aim of the prophets than it was of him in whom all prophecy was fulfilled[1].

Is the same account, then, to be given of the predictions, if such they be, in the last nine chapters? This leads us directly to the question, What is Ezekiel's place in the history of the Hebrew priesthood? These chapters will only be intelligible if we start upon their consideration from the conception of holiness. The root idea of the holiness is still very difficult to determine. 'The holy,' says Wellhausen, 'is the prohibited.' S. Reinach expresses that which is holy—'taboo' or 'sacer' —as that which is 'fortement marqué'; that which is strongly marked comes to be carefully marked off. A. B. Davidson says that among the Semites the word 'holy,' originally used in a physical sense (though this is not found in the Bible), properly expresses the general nature of deity. Into the archaeological question we need not at present enter[1]; but the word, as we find it in Ezekiel, denotes a contagious quality in Yahweh and in certain persons and articles brought into close contact with Yahweh. This quality, which may exist in greater or less degree, dependent on greater or less nearness to Yahweh, must be carefully guarded by those in whom it resides. It is dangerous to lose; dangerous also to acquire; for those persons and things which possess it are surrounded by certain ceremonial restrictions, the violation of which means pollution; and pollution or profanation must always rouse Yahweh's wrath.

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[1] Compare Matt. xxiv; Luke xxi.

Stated thus, the principle of holiness seems pagan rather than in any true sense religious; and indeed the study of the Biblical conception of holiness constantly reminds us of primitive beliefs and practices, which point forward, so to speak, to the ritual of Israel; but nothing can be found which is connected with the higher side of Israelite religion and is at the same time divorced from morality. To the Hebrew, the three ideas of holiness, purity, and cleanness are as closely connected as they could be to us. Cleanliness is not next to godliness; it is godliness. What rouses Yahweh's wrath is any kind of filth, physical or moral. The difference between a literal and a metaphorical interpretation of the garment 'unspotted by the world' was not yet realized. Literal and metaphorical contamination were equally to be condemned, because each resulted from a self-willed refusal of what Yahweh demands. The ritual acts of the priest at the shrine, in the eyes of the antiquarian, may be simply what have come down to him from his forerunners; to him, they were what his god long ago had commanded. The really noteworthy thing about the priestly law in Israel is that what Yahweh is felt to have commanded justifies itself more and more to the moral sense. Even prohibitions that seem merely capricious or accidental are found to be protections against contamination from those heathen practices where physical and moral uncleanness went hand in hand.

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[1] See notes on xliv. 15-27.

To Ezekiel the prophetic view that the history of the past had been one long moral disobedience was joined to the priests' view that it had been one great ritual mistake. Holy things and places had been put to the wrong uses; there had been a terrible confusion of the sacred and the profane, until at last Yahweh was forced out of his own temple; and his presence had been replaced by that of corpses interred there, of uncircumcised temple servants, and of unholy and monstrous superstitious rites. Sacrifices offered by impure hands could avail nothing. Hence the imperative need of new legislation. The temple must be preserved from all impurity; the degrees of holiness must be preserved; the sacrifices must be defined and fenced round so that they may become effective for real atonement; and the priests must keep themselves pure for their high office. When the temple is thus made the centre of the nation's holiness the whole nation will be grouped, so to speak, around it; there must be as little inter-tribal rivalry as there will be monarchical oppression; each tribe, like the priests, the inhabitants of the holy city, and the prince, will have its own estates to cultivate, and there will be nothing to disturb Yahweh's gracious presence in the midst of his people.

Rightly understood, this scheme of worship does not really separate the worshipper from his god. True, all save the priests must remain in the outer courts of the new temple; and all save the priests must simply look on while the sacrifices are being offered. Others cannot even, it would seem, lay their hands on the victim at the moment it is to be slain. But they know that Yahweh is always ready to be approached; the very name of their city is 'Yahweh is there'; and though the priests alone must perform the sacrifice in the temple, the priests can in no way step in between Yahweh and the spiritual life of his people. Ezekiel is no sacerdotalist in our modern sense; he knows nothing of confession to a priest, of absolution pronounced from priestly lips, of penances fixed by some priestly casuist, or of any grace of ordination communicated by persons standing in some carefully guarded episcopal succession. Instead of this, he points rather to the Epistle to the Hebrews. Christianity itself knows and relies upon a mediator. For us, too, it is needful that one should go within the veil as our forerunner; but our mediator is raised above us infinitely higher than the sons of Zadok were raised above the rest of the chosen people. What had yet to be revealed to Ezekiel was that through such a mediator every privilege capable of being given to any one might be given to all. No longer has the mediator access for us; we have our access through him. Yet no promise could be more majestic or more tender than that for which the Christian seer borrows the very words of Ezekiel: 'God himself shall be with them; and they shall be his people, and he shall be their God.'

Such, then, is the 'prophecy' of the last nine chapters. It is not only a prophecy; it is an ideal. It is not only an ideal; it is a promise. As such, it still awaits complete fulfilment; but 'God's gifts put man's best dreams to shame'; and it is no wonder if, as the sun arises, we forget the light which heralded its approach.

IV. EZEKIEL'S UTOPIA.

The preceding section led us to a consideration of Ezekiel's sketch of the future constitution of the Jewish church in his last nine chapters; this subject now demands a further study. These chapters are unique in the Old Testament as being, at least in appearance, a detailed prophecy of the future; they are also unique as containing a definite and organic body of law. Although so much of the Pentateuch is occupied with the law, yet the law, as we have it, is in a somewhat confused condition, and writings of very different dates are placed in juxtaposition. Even the Decalogue in the forms in which it appears in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, is probably not in its original state [1]. In the book of Exodus it is immediately followed by what is now generally known as the Book of the Covenant [2], a collection of provisions which are distinctly more primitive than any other parts of the law as found in the Pentateuch, and are certainly intended for an early and pastoral or semi-pastoral state of society. Here nothing is said about the illegality of sacrifice and worship save at one central shrine; the cases of crime and fraud which are mentioned are just those which would occur among tribes little removed from the life of the more civilized Bedouin of to-day; the duties enforced are mainly those of elementary morality and humanity, and the law of priests, sacrifices, and feasts is dismissed almost summarily.

When we turn to the book of Deuteronomy, we find it to be a mixture of law, history, and exhortation. The hortatory sections of the book contain some of the finest rhetoric in the Old Testament; the legal sections are obviously later than the Book of the Covenant. Not only is the centralization of worship insisted on in terms which would condemn Samuel, David, and Jehoshaphat alike, but the monarchy is referred to in terms which almost certainly refer to the actual conduct of Solomon and his successors. The points of civil law, though still simple, show a distinct advance on the Book of the Covenant; and the duties of the priesthood are treated with quite a new detail, as foreign to the earlier document as it is to the earlier history of Israel.

The rest of the law exhibits quite different features.

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[1] See the discussion in Harper's *Amos and Hosea*, pp. lviii ff.

[2] Exod. xxi. 1–xxiii. 19.

It is scattered up and down the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, with very little perceptible arrangement, but with a very distinct system and even vocabulary of its own. If these laws are all taken from their surroundings and arranged according to their subject-matter, it will be found that the state of things which they contemplate is further removed from Deuteronomy than is Deuteronomy from the Book of the Covenant. We shall find ourselves in possession of a code of which the central idea is a nation organized for worship, under the guidance of a priestly class subdivided into high-priest, priests, and Levites. The institution of a central shrine is never commanded; it is uniformly taken for granted. Not a word is said to imply the existence of a monarchy or of those simple conditions which prevailed before the time of Saul; the necessities of civil government are hardly thought of, and the elaborateness of the feasts with their accompanying sacrifices, now wholly distinct from the popular festivals with which they were identified in the first code, imply that people as well as priests were content to regard the due celebration of ritual as their first business. We even find that ancient history has been rewritten in accord with the religious views of this body of law. It is difficult to imagine when this code could have been obeyed, except after the return from Babylon, or when it could have been composed, except during and after the exile.

But now comes the crucial question, What is the relation of Ezekiel's code to all this? He too has his laws of priests, of sacrifices, and of festivals; to which sections of the Pentateuch do they correspond? Another question should be asked first, Why did he need to draw up any code at all? Why could he not be content with what existed already? If the whole of the Pentateuchal law be regarded as having existed from the time of Moses, this question becomes peculiarly difficult. But if this were the case, the existence of three such different bodies of law would be an equal difficulty. Here, as so often in Old Testament problems, the key is really furnished by Ezekiel.

A very brief inspection is sufficient to show that Ezekiel's code, however it was intended, lies between Deuteronomy and the developed Levitical legislation which is now generally known as the Priests' code; it could not have been written without the first; it could not have been written had the second been known to the author. The detailed grounds for this statement will be given in the notes to the chapters in question, but the most important of them may be mentioned here.

1. Deuteronomy recognizes no distinction between priests and Levites, but only between the country priests from the 'high places' and the priests of the temple in Jerusalem. The Priests' code sharply distinguishes the functions of priests and Levites. Ezekiel keeps the Deuteronomic distinction between country and city priests, but uses the country priests, who no longer have any other work to do, to replace the uncircumcised aliens who have hitherto ministered in the temple. He further confines the priestly office to the family of Zadok; this restriction is not insisted on in the Priests' code, which regards all the family of Aaron as being of priestly descent.

2. Deuteronomy contemplates monarchical rule and foreign wars. The Priests' code never alludes to one or the other; but regards the high-priest as the supreme head of the community. Ezekiel knows nothing of a high-priest; on the other hand, he replaces the king of the older régime by a 'prince,' who is apparently responsible for the maintenance of the established order of things, but seems to have even less opportunity of initiative than the popes of the middle ages, in the moment of their highest hopes, wished to allow to the 'secular arm.'

3. Deuteronomy, like the older code, is silent as to any Day of Atonement. The impressive ritual of the

annual Day of Atonement in the Priests' code[1] is well known. Ezekiel prescribes two Days of Atonement, one at the beginning of each half-year; but the ceremonial is simple; it resembles that of the Priests' code only in the central idea, viz. that unintentional acts may have violated the holiness which ought to be preserved unspotted in all that pertains to the worship of Yahweh, and thus have rendered necessary a cleansing by the ceremonial shedding of 'atoning' blood.

4. More or less precise details are given in all these codes with reference to the sacrifices to be offered on particular occasions. Not only do these differ, but it will be found in each case that Ezekiel demands rather more than Deuteronomy, and the Priests' code rather more than Ezekiel.

At this point a fresh fact claims notice. As has often been pointed out, the last half of the book of Leviticus[2] has a distinct unity of its own. Klostermann first emphasized this fact, and gave to the ten chapters the name of the Law of Holiness. More interesting is the observation that this Law of Holiness offers special similarities to Ezekiel, and especially to his last nine chapters. There is very much in common between the language of the two documents; the subject-matter is to a large extent the same. The characteristic views of Ezekiel, as for example the importance of the temple as the centre of the holiness of the land and the nation, the importance of the land to Yahweh even when the nation is removed from it, the representation of idolatry as 'whoredom,' the tracing back of national disobedience to Egypt, explicit references to the sacrifice of children, emphasis on the sabbath, and the view that the transgression of commands, whether moral or ritual, defiles the land, are all prominent in these later chapters of Leviticus—far more prominent than elsewhere. These facts have led some to consider that

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[1] Lev. xvi. [2] xvii–xxvi.

Ezekiel must have been the author of the chapters in question. But on the other hand there are certain features in each of the documents which do not appear in the other; in Leviticus, for instance, the distinction between priests and Levites does not appear, although the high-priest is mentioned in Lev. xxi. 10-15. The question of the actual relation between them is so difficult that it is still quite uncertain which was written first, and even how much of these and other chapters of Leviticus is to be regarded as included in the 'Book of Holiness[1].' What is certain is that the same period in history and the same circle of thought saw the appearance of both Ezekiel's sketch and the Law of Holiness, just as at an earlier period an equally earnest group of minds had produced the Deuteronomic code. Clearly, these men of the first half of the exile, deeply impressed as they were with the importance of priestly tradition and ceremonial, felt that Deuteronomy was now insufficient. With a faith as courageous as that of Jeremiah when he bought the land on which the Chaldaeans were encamped[2], they set themselves to legislate for a time when the restoration—impossible as it seemed to others—should be complete, and when the restored people should show a zeal for religion and an obedience to their own amended provisions never realized before, but—such was the real miracle—actually attained in the years to come!

It would, however, be a mistake to think of Ezekiel merely as one of a group or school. His conservatism is far more than the love of the old simply because it is old. His plan for the rebuilt temple contains several striking innovations upon established custom[1]. On its walls he even refuses to allow gold—a vast difference from Solomon here; and in its sacrifices he will have no wine. This is the conservatism of the radical reformer. To him, gold and wine are both full of the suggestions of the Canaanite influence, against which his work is one long protest. They may have all the weight of prescription in their favour; but if they spell heathenish associations, he will have none of them. Equally striking is his calm neglect of the royal house. True, in the earlier part of the book 'my servant David' is referred to[2], but never in words which, like those of Isaiah or Micah, suggest a crown and a throne. His lament over the princes of Josiah's house is full of pathetic beauty; but his condemnation of the attempts at oriental tyranny by the kings is sternness itself; and in providing only for the prince in his new constitution, he goes back to 1 Sam. xii and the earlier ideal of the theocracy. He leaves little place for the Messiah of Isaiah.

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[1] See the full bibliography in *Enc. Bibl.*, art. Leviticus. Smend and H. P. Smith hold that Lev. xvii-xxvi (H) is later than Ezekiel; G. F. Moore, that H preceded Ezekiel by half a century; Baentzsch believes part of H to have been written before Ezekiel and part afterwards.

[2] Jer. xxxii. 6 ff.; compare the story of the putting up to auction in Rome of the land occupied by Hannibal's camp, Livy, xxvi. 11. Compare also Victor Hugo, 'Time present works for time to come; work, then, and hope. Such is Ezekiel's cry.'

Equal originality of mind is shown by Ezekiel in his conception of the stream which is to issue forth from the temple in the golden age of the future. To us, the picture of the rapidly deepening waters, flowing, as it seems, without the smallest consideration of geographical conditions, into the Dead Sea, is somewhat grotesque. So is the celestial chariot of the first chapter, if we try to picture all its details to our minds together. But we must remember the precise quality of the Hebrew imagination. Strikingly powerful in brief comparisons and parables—glances, as it were, into an ideal world—it is generally incapable of the sustained effort which can weld the various elements of its picture into an artistic and consistent whole. From the parallel inability to plan out a whole work Ezekiel is remarkably free. Perhaps it would be truer to say that a picture of which the parts cannot be joined together was no more objectionable to the Semitic mind than the combinations of man and eagle or ox in the Assyrian sculptures. The important point is the symbolism. R. H. Hutton[1] has remarked that there is no real nature poetry in the Old Testament, because the poets insist on passing immediately to the contemplation of nature's Creator and Ruler. Neither Ezekiel nor his readers will be distressed by the physiographical difficulties of the picture of the renewed Jerusalem and its environs; but they will be impressed by the thought that from the very centre of Yahweh's holiness flows forth the stream that makes the land as completely in accord with the spirit of Yahweh's law as are his servants. How natural for the lover of 'the mountains of Israel' to send the river of purification through their midst. In the visions of a later time, which owed more of their inspiration to Ezekiel than to any other writing, that river became the river of water of life, on whose banks grew the tree of life whose leaves were for the healing of the nations.

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[1] See esp. notes at end of xliii.

[2] See notes on xxxiv. 23, 24.

V. Ezekiel's Conception of God.

We now come to what is really the most important part of our consideration of Ezekiel; every prophet, like every religious teacher, must finally be judged by what he has to tell us about the mind and will and character of God.

The foundation of the prophetic message is the sentence in which Judaism has found its brief but comprehensive creed, 'Hear, O Israel, Yahweh our God is one Yahweh[2].' It is the creed of what may be termed National Monotheism; Yahweh is Israel's God, and Yahweh, unlike the Baals of the heathen world, is God alone. The two statements combined in this creed Ezekiel of course holds as firmly as any of his fellows. Attempts have been made to eliminate from the earlier prophets the most strikingly monotheistic language, as the result of later editing, but for the most part on very slender grounds. When all has been subtracted which critical ingenuity can question, it remains the fact that the prophets could not have written as they have done unless they were convinced that Yahweh, and Yahweh alone, was supreme over Israel and its destinies, over the nations around, and over the future of the world. Once admit this, and there is no need to quarrel about the doxologies in Amos.

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[1] *Literary Essays*, 'The Poetry of the Old Testament.'

[2] Deut. vi. 4, known in Judaism as the 'Shema' ('hear').

What then was the superstructure which Ezekiel built on this foundation? At first sight, some would say, 'it seems hardly worth the raising. The character of Yahweh, as Ezekiel conceives it, strikes us as narrow and forbidding. The message he confides to Ezekiel is one long harsh and threatening complaint. He is never tired of rebuking the 'rebellious house,' and speedily quenches what natural pity Ezekiel himself feels towards his countrymen. Again, the sins which rouse his anger are ritual as much as moral; the two are constantly combined; and instead of the soul-stirring ethical denunciations of the earlier prophets, which appeal unfalteringly to the universal consciousness of humanity, we are compelled to listen to attacks on Israel for having offered sacrifice at the wrong places or by the wrong people.

There is also a marked tone of self-assertiveness in Yahweh's words as we read them here. This tone, indeed, meets us elsewhere; most readers of the Old Testament have felt surprised that the gracious and long-suffering Shepherd of Israel should condescend to rate his people for not giving him all his due honour, and to upbraid them for the crime of *lèse-majesté*, much as we might conceive the feudal God of Anselm to have done. But Ezekiel goes further. The conclusion of one oracle after another, 'that they may know that I am Yahweh,' suggests that self-assertion was the sole end alike of punishment and of mercy. When some gracious promise is announced, Yahweh is quick to add 'not for your sakes do I this, but for mine own name's sake,' destroying in a breath the gratitude that might have risen in response. The very miseries of the exile are turned into an aggravation of the guilt of Israel, for their result has been the pollution of Yahweh's name among the Gentiles, and when this pollution has come to an end by the return from Babylon, the survivors will only be plagued into self-loathing by the memory of the sins which had driven them from the land.

Further, there would seem to be still darker traits in Ezekiel's portraiture of Yahweh. If a selfish or avaricious prophet is deceived as to the future, and so leads astray the unfortunate people who inquire of him, it is Yahweh who has deceived the man; and Yahweh himself accepts the responsibility for the cruel customs which ordained the slaughter of the first-born in Israel: 'I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgements wherein they should not live; and I polluted them in their own gifts[1].' Even some who would not go as far as Duhm, and assert that Ezekiel has brought no new idea to prophecy, have felt that in the mind of Ezekiel Yahweh is not unlike the God of the crudest Calvinism, in whose arbitrary will alone stands whatever distinction exists between right and wrong, whose chief demand is for servile reverence, who exults in punishment as the most convincing exhibition of his own might, and who, if he spares, is simply actuated by some further plan for his own glorification.

Let us admit the plausibility of this view; let us admit also that it contains many elements of truth, and that Ezekiel lived in a world quite familiar with views which are entirely foreign to us. It is none the less true that the main attribute of Yahweh in Ezekiel's eyes is not any one of those which we have mentioned; it is his holiness; and in the mind of Ezekiel holiness sums up all physical, moral, and religious worth, and is the precise opposite of all that is mean or loathsome[1]. 'For my name's sake' means, therefore, 'for the sake of all that is worth having or being,'—as we might say, 'in the name of morality, humanity, and religion.' To prevent the pollution of Yahweh's name is necessarily the highest possible motive, because such pollution is nothing but the tainting of purity itself with corruption, calling good evil and evil good, giving sweet for bitter and bitter for sweet, and summoning 'red ruin and the breaking up of laws.'

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[1] xx. 25, 26.

To assure Israel that her restoration was demanded by the vindication of Yahweh's honour was to give, not only the most majestic, but the most satisfying promise. 'Your return,' Ezekiel was saying in reality, 'is not the result of any sudden and capricious veering of divine favour; it is the effect (to put the matter into modern language) of the eternal and immutable laws of truth and right.' The prediction that Israel would loathe herself for her old sins is not the sign of a power which grudged the happiness it could not altogether withhold; it is rather the highest promise, that Israel would then understand the foundation of all true happiness, and therefore would never again fall into the sins which had previously made such happiness an impossible dream. God has no higher gift to a man than the state of grace in which he calls himself 'less than the least of all saints,' and even 'the chief of sinners.'

The position of Ezekiel and of those who thought and felt with him was not unlike that of a Puritan in the seventeenth century. The Puritan too was a Calvinist, but his Calvinism was a keener spur to set a wrong world right, and a clearer illumination of the hidden love of a holy God, than the world had ever known before. Ezekiel had lived through his Revolution, and the establishment of the Kingdom of Saints, in 621 B.C.; he had found his Cromwell in Josiah; he had witnessed a Stuart reaction under Josiah's degenerate sons; perhaps Pelatiah was another Samuel Butler, with all the malice, but none of the wit, needed to make him the author of another *Hudibras*.

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[1] This is the real significance of the theophany in chap. i: see the notes thereon; also pp. 23, 24.

Rightly to understand what Yahweh's holiness meant to Ezekiel, we must have undergone Ezekiel's experiences; we must have seen the women weeping for Tammuz, and bringing to the crowds who thronged the temple courts at Jerusalem all the lewd ideas of the baser Oriental mythology; we must have watched the twenty-five men deliberately defying Yahweh in Yahweh's own house, or Nebuchadnezzar plying his divinations to decide whether Judah or Ammon should be his first victim. We must have marked with scorn and fear like Ezekiel's the degraded yet alluring idolatries of heathenism, so dangerous because so similar to the rites to which Israel had already been accustoming herself for years in Palestine; we must have grown indignant over the torrent of commercial dishonesty and greed which had swept away the remnants of the old Israelite simplicity and goodness, and wept in anguish at the thought that the city which had been created to be the joy of the whole earth, had been humbled by the wicked folly of her own children before the derision and contempt of the heathen world. To Ezekiel, unable to distinguish between the ritual and moral elements in religion, the practices which he saw around him were abominations as horrible as sacrilege and incest are to us.

But there is another side to Ezekiel's conception of Yahweh, which we discover where we least expect it. The interpretation of Yahweh's holiness which we have been considering culminates in the terrible sixteenth and twenty-third chapters, and yet those chapters contain something very different as well. No one can read them without being reminded of Hosea's touching picture of the wandering and restored wife. Ezekiel seems to write without a spark of Hosea's tenderness ; and he ends, not with the gentle note of alluring, albeit into the wilderness, but with harsh rebukes and threats. And yet Yahweh does restore ; he confesses himself bound to do so ; and no sooner has the middle chapter of the book been passed than Ezekiel sets himself to describe how Yahweh brings forth the new order. Though the wicked man must die, Yahweh has no pleasure in his death[1]. Israel has sinned ; and though she must suffer, the real responsibility shall fall on the shoulders of those who led her astray[2], after which the showers of blessing will at last be able to fall plenteously on the thirsty land.

Is not all this in contradiction to the first half of the book? Is not Ezekiel now giving us a different picture of Yahweh? By no means. He has gazed firmly on the worst. He has no illusions or unverifiable hopes. Unlike the prophet of the second half of the exile, he has heard no rumour of Cyrus ; the power of Nebuchadnezzar stands unshaken—so strong that Ezekiel himself never explicitly foretells its downfall. The condition of Israel is not yet instinct with new-born hope ; the exiles speak of themselves only as a mass of dried-up bones. And yet, as if Babylon had never existed, and as if a stone of the walls of Jerusalem had never fallen, Ezekiel sets himself deliberately to follow out the new order of things in Yahweh's mind.

To this task he devotes himself with striking sobriety. He cannot think of Yahweh as did the second Isaiah, exhausting the resources of language in the majestic fullness of his promises. Ezekiel had known too well how stern were the facts and necessities of punishment, to feel that Yahweh could speak thus. Nor could he soar to the heights from which Isaiah beheld the return as a triumphal procession across the desert[3]. Ezekiel was at once too practical and too prosaic for this; neither Mendelssohn nor Handel could have set Ezekiel's prophecies to their immortal music. But to Ezekiel, Yahweh is not the God of the poet only, but of the statesman, and —must we not add?—of the theologian. In the mind of Ezekiel, Yahweh does not forget the past, or exchange an attitude of wrath, which for a short time he has maintained, for one of deep and abiding mercy. He is rather the God who fulfils himself in many ways. To such a God, no detail either of the past, the present, or the future can be unimportant. He sees the past as bound to the future. He makes even the failures and shame of the past the foundation of the new city whose name is to bear witness to his abiding presence in her midst. He is not content with the announcement of a mighty promise, nor even with the exhibition of his own mighty hand and outstretched arm; he sees the exact temptations of his people; he saves them therefrom, not by an outward and political change, but by an inward change of heart; and he plans out the means whereby those temptations shall lose all their power to hurt in the future.

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[1] xxxiii. 11. [2] xxxiv. 1-22. [3] Cf. Isa. liv. 10, xl. 4, 5.

Is not this the true interpretation of the ways of God, alike with the nation and with the individual soul? The drama of national repentance which Ezekiel foreshadowed contains the type of all true repentance,—of the passing from the old life to the new. However clearly marked may be the moment of conversion, it does but join together two lives. The second life is best lived by the man who has most fully learnt the lesson of the first. When Paul, in the seventh chapter of Romans, speaks of a man chained to a body of death, is he thinking of his experience before conversion or after it? We cannot tell, because Paul could not. He had passed through that experience, and it lived. Ezekiel places himself at the moment of the nation's conversion. Over that conversion Yahweh is presiding. When Ezekiel set in order the first half of his book, he knew what was coming in the second; when he set in order the second, he did not forget the words which Yahweh had uttered in his ears long before. Man's conversion is the vindication of God's holiness[1].

In this way Ezekiel, more fully than any other writer of the Old Testament, reveals what is the true 'work of faith,' the 'reasonable service[2].' There is but one gap in his prophecy,—the gap which his great companion of the exile partially filled, the picture of him who said, 'for their sakes I sanctify myself (make myself holy), that they also might be sanctified through the truth[3].' We have hinted at a parallel between Ezekiel and Dante[4]. The parallel is closer than might at first sight appear. Ezekiel has gazed into an Inferno as weird and terrible as Dante's; upon the top of the mountain and the whole limit round about, which was most holy, he has seen and sketched out a Paradise of order and harmony as satisfying as that which Beatrice revealed to Dante; and in his analysis of the wrath of God, which heals while it punishes, and of the fears of men, which change from the tormenting terror of punishment to the shrinking dread of the polluting touch of sin, he reaches a height of spiritual experience unsurpassed by Dante, with all the New Testament behind him.

VI. DATE, CANONICITY, AND TEXT OF THE BOOK.

There is no problem of Ezekiel in the sense that there are problems of Isaiah, the Psalms, or the Pentateuch. The few attempts that have been made to question the authenticity of any part of the book, save isolated verses, have been their own refutation. Three questions, however, demand some brief notice before we pass to the book itself.

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[1] Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.
[2] Rom. xii. 1; 'service' is here a distinctly ritual word.
[3] John xvii. 19.
[4] See also Elvet Lewis, *By the River Chebar*, pp. 1, 2.

First, When did Ezekiel's writings assume the shape in which now we have them? All the prophecies are carefully dated; they fall, as we have seen, into two halves, dated respectively before and after the capture of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. But Smend has argued strongly, not only that in its present form the whole book is later than 586, but that the prophecies of the fall of Jerusalem and of the other nations, so far as they were fulfilled, were 'vaticinia ex eventu.' He urges in support of this the strikingly artistic character of the book, the general balance of part with part, the various parables, figures, and discourses which all show to him marks of literary elaboration. It seems to him highly improbable that a prophet's varied activity through a term of years would have had results so harmonious as these, and the presence of sentences like that in chapter xxiii. 36, 'wilt thou judge Oholah and Oholibah?' seem to imply a note to some contemporary comment rather than that comment itself. The grouping of the oracles against the heathen in the centre of the book he thinks peculiarly suspicious.

In reply, it must be pointed out that the editing of addresses previously made is not the same thing as the reference of addresses to dates when they had not yet been thought of. No one can deny that Ezekiel used a speaker's privilege to polish and edit his previous messages; nor is there anything in the book as we have it to preclude this hypothesis. But to contend that no part of what we have now was written till after 586 is a different matter. Is it such a difficult thing to believe that Ezekiel was assured before that date that Jerusalem would fall? It would be far more difficult to believe that Ezekiel hoped or cared to persuade his contemporaries that he had made a prediction which none of them had ever heard. Their reply would have been too easy and obvious. 'Why did we not know at the time that you saw such a catastrophe to be on its way?' Smend's contention can hardly explain Ezekiel's references to his own conduct and condition previous to the arrival of the fatal news. Why does Ezekiel make so much of his dumbness if it never happened? and if it did happen, those other prophetic experiences must also have happened which are so closely connected with it. The numerous parabolic actions, the 'toy siege,' the lying on the back, and the digging through the wall, whether we prefer to interpret them literally or not, would at best have a very doubtful significance, and even less literary value, if they were invented years after the time when they were supposed to have taken place. In the face of these difficulties, we may be forgiven for believing that Ezekiel would have rejected any suggestion of such artifice and literary fraud. It is one thing to throw doubt on the traditional account of unnamed and undated fragments of prophetic writing; it is quite another to challenge the carefully dated account which a writer gives of his own works[1].

Strangely enough, the canonicity of the book has been much debated in Jewish circles. One would have thought that a book which bore so clearly the marks of its authorship would have aroused no disputes; and it is quite true that Ezekiel has always been counted one of the three greater prophets, along with Isaiah and Jeremiah; as such he has his place with them in the Hebrew Bible, and he is mentioned along with them in the catalogue of the famous men of old in Ecclesiasticus[2]. In the Talmudic treatise *Baba bathra*, it is stated curiously that the book of Ezekiel was written by the 'men of the great synagogue,' along with Daniel, Esther, and the Minor Prophets. Various doubts are expressed as to its canonicity elsewhere in the Talmud, Proverbs, Esther, and Ecclesiastes being regarded with similar uncertainty. Jerome informs us that the Jewish doctors forbade any one under the age of thirty to read either the beginning and end of the book of Ezekiel or the exordium of Genesis.

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[1] See also footnote on p. 5.

[2] xlix. 8.

The reason of all this caution is not far to seek. The Jews knew nothing of what we call historical criticism; but the comparative study of the Bible had been carried by them to great lengths, though on what we should consider unscientific methods. They could not therefore fail to notice the grave discrepancies between Ezekiel and parts of the Pentateuch. The conclusion was obvious; 'One of the two must be wrong; it cannot be Moses; it must therefore be Ezekiel.' The Jewish tractate *Hagiga* contains the well-known story that Hananiah, or, as Graetz and Derembourg think more likely, Eleazar ben Hananiah, asked for 300 measures of oil, and forthwith retired to his room with copies of Ezekiel and of the Law; before the oil was finished he had reconciled every discrepancy and indicated the claim of Ezekiel to a place in the canon.

In the Christian Church the book has never been doubted. It is naturally quoted but seldom in the New Testament; its subject-matter is enough to account for this; but the paucity of references elsewhere is more than made up for in the book of Revelation; the finest passages of the seer of Patmos are based, almost verbally, on the closest and most loving study of the prophet of the Babylonian exile.

A third question is more difficult. It concerns the text of the book. Every commentary has pointed out that the textual problems of Ezekiel are as perplexing as the critical questions are simple. The Septuagint translation suggests an exceptional number of variations from the received Hebrew text, which is represented as closely as possible in our Revised Version. It is well known that the character of the Septuagint translation (LXX) as a whole varies greatly in different parts of the Old Testament; in some books it is far more careful and close to the original than in others; in some books, again, it would seem that its original showed distinct differences from our present Hebrew text, while elsewhere the order of verses and even of chapters differs greatly from our own. In Ezekiel the translation is evidently a very careful one; where the translators misunderstood words they would simply transliterate them [1]; the order of the Hebrew words is often preserved intentionally; and, while a few passages are distinctly free from Hebraisms, literalness is often secured at the cost of idiomatic Greek, as it is also in Aquila's Greek translation of the Old Testament.

But through this very conscientiousness the translators have made it clear that they had before them another text than that which is represented in our English Bible. For while we can generally turn their Greek back into Hebrew with ease, that Hebrew is often strangely different from the text which we possess. Nor is the difference one of accidental 'various readings,' but of character and style. No English reader will fail to notice in this book the number of redundant clauses and repeated sentences, and also the number of almost hopelessly obscure passages. In the Septuagint the obscurities are distinctly fewer, and even where they exist in the Greek, they can sometimes be got rid of by working back through the Greek to the Hebrew; while most of the redundancies and repetitions are cut away, giving an impression of vigour and even, in places, of an epigrammatic terseness of which the English version knows nothing. Further, the received text is found to be the less forcible and vigorous of the two in other ways. Attacks upon Israel's sin, as we find them in the Septuagint, are toned down; weaker expressions take the place of the stronger ones found in the Septuagint [2]; references to heathenism are less explicit [3]; parallels to the Priests' code and the Book of Holiness appear which are absent in the Septuagint[1]; unfulfilled prophecies, as they appear in the Septuagint, are altered to be consistent with the facts of history[2]; expressions not found in the Septuagint or found there in a different form read like marginal notes which have made their way into the text[3]; while obvious numerical and other errors in the Hebrew are corrected in the Greek version[4].

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[1] This is especially the case in connexion with Ezekiel's technical terms for portions of the Temple; in one case a false reading which would not make sense was simply transliterated (xli. 8).

[2] v. 16, vii. 24, ix. 1, xviii. 18, xxi. 5, xxxii. 6.

[3] xxxii. 27, &c.

If we are to assume that we have here two types of text, which is the older? Until lately, it was customary to regard the Septuagint as suspect whenever it differed from the received text; but it is now claiming more and more attention, and the oldest fragment of the text of the Hebrew Bible yet discovered, the Nash Papyrus[5], is certainly nearer to the original of the Septuagint than to the received text. For deciding questions of this kind, we have three canons—the shorter version is preferable to the longer; the harder version is preferable to the easier; and, that version is to be preferred from which the other can be more easily deduced. Now the Septuagint text is certainly the shorter; and to a Jewish reader it is the harder; for its peculiarities are just those which, apparently inconsistent with other parts of the Bible or unsuitable to the dignity of an inspired text, would have caused surprise and scandal to a Jew. Can we then explain the rise of the received text from an original text similar to that represented by the Septuagint? Here, conjecture is our only weapon; but it has been suggested that in the case of this book the difficulties which occasioned its special treatment by the Jewish doctors were also responsible for the systematic alterations of the text. In order that it might not be thrown out of the Canon altogether, the scribes subjected it to a thorough revision; its startling brevities were rounded off, its daring references were softened, its objectionable bluntness was smoothed down, its inconsistencies with the Pentateuch, though not removed, were made less glaring, and its allusions to previous history were assimilated to the orthodox views of later times. The result could hardly be altogether successful; Ezekiel was too forcible and individual a writer to be thus tamed and shorn of his peculiarities; hence, it is concluded, we are left with a book which exhibits at once prolixity and terseness, obscurity and almost childish simplicity, the powerful expressions of a great and original mind side by side with the cumbrous explanations of an annotator.

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[1] xxviii. 13, &c. [2] xxxii. 9, &c.

[3] xvi. 32, xlii. 12, &c. The superiority of the LXX, however, is by no means self-evident in all the above instances.

[4] xlii. 3, 10-12, xlv. 1, 20. In other passages the LXX is obviously wrong, as in xlvii. 8.

[5] Containing the Decalogue and the 'Shema.'

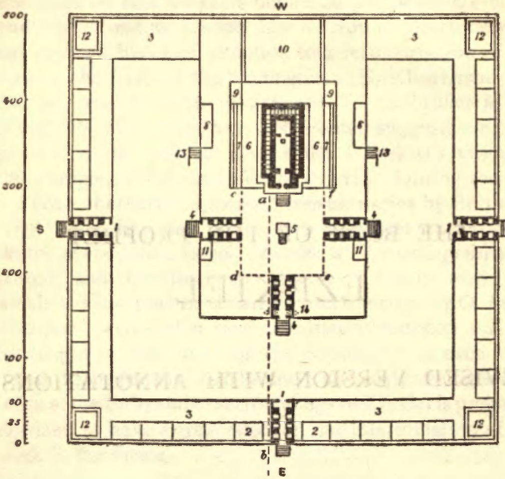
Of course to speak with certainty is impossible. It may be that Ezekiel himself, who in so many respects occupied a middle position and reconciled opposites in himself, has exhibited these contradictory characteristics in his own style; or perhaps, as Kraetzschmar suggests, he was himself responsible for two recensions of his work, subsequently run together. As it must be admitted, the first-mentioned hypothesis assumes that the scribes, at whatever they worked, took considerable liberties with their author; but from all that we know of the literary activities of later Judaism, it is quite likely that an impressive but difficult author should have been altered and adapted; the very alterations only leave the text in some places more obscure and inconsistent. Later students would hardly have been able to extract from the Ezekiel of our received text so striking and consistent a literary production as must have been the original of the Septuagint. On the other hand, it is easy to exaggerate the difficulties of the received text and the excellences of the Septuagint's original. It is not probable that any Hebrew prophet wrote with the fear of the standards of German literary criticism before his eyes. That errors should have crept into the text in course of transmission, or that they should have been left in it by the author, is quite possible; cleverly manipulated, they can be made to suggest a whole series of recensions and editions; but we may be permitted to wonder that with a subject-matter so constantly obscure and involved, the errors or corruptions in the text—call them what we please—are not far more numerous, and, in all but a few passages of special difficulty, far more baffling.

A few words may be added on the literature of the book. Very little has been written upon Ezekiel in English; but what has been written is of a high level. A. B. Davidson's commentary in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools* (1892) is extremely full and judicious; C. H. Toy's commentary (1899) is especially full on points of archaeological interpretation, and is well illustrated; H. A. Redpath has carefully edited the book for the *Westminster Commentaries* series (1907); and J. Skinner's volume on Ezekiel in the *Expositor's Bible* is rich in suggestiveness. The text has also been carefully but boldly edited by Toy for Haupt's *Polychrome Old Testament* (1899). The articles on Ezekiel by Skinner in Hastings's *Bible Dictionary* and Toy in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* outline the most recent discussions of the problems raised by the book. A very careful discussion of Ezekiel's conception of Holiness (repeated in great part from his commentary) will be found in Davidson's *Theology of the Old Testament*. Elvet Lewis's *By the River Chebar* suggests some of the uses to which Ezekiel may be put in popular exposition. Even in Germany much less attention has been given to Ezekiel than to most of the larger books of the Old Testament. Passing by the learned but now largely antiquated work of Hitzig, Hengstenberg, Keil, and others (although Hitzig especially will be found to be still fresh and stimulating), the first important commentary written from a modern standpoint is that of Smend (1880), the author of the *History of the Development of the Religion* *of Israel*; he is strongest in the light he throws on Ezekiel's prophecies from contemporary and previous religious history, and vice versa. He was followed by Cornill (1886), who confesses the fascination which the prophet had exercised on him for years before he published his book, and who, 'treating Ezekiel like a Latin or Greek classic,' has devoted his chief attention to a reconstruction of the text on the basis of the Septuagint. H. Klostermann, in *Studien und Kritiken* (1877), and D. H. Müller in his *Ezekielstudien* (1895), have contributed suggestive monographs to the text, as also Kühn ('Ezekiel's vision of the Temple,' 1882), and Gautier (1891). During the last ten years there have appeared commentaries by Bertholet (1897), who has also produced a pamphlet on Ezekiel's sketch of the future Israel, *Hesekiel's Verfassungsentwurf* (1896), and Kraetzschmar (1900). Cornill's work has within the last year been carried much further by O. Jahn, who has produced a text admittedly founded on the Septuagint. The study of the Septuagint is even now nearer its beginning than its end; and our growing knowledge of the Babylonian surroundings of Ezekiel is probably destined to have a great effect on our interpretation of his work in the future.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET
EZEKIEL

REVISED VERSION WITH ANNOTATIONS

Plan A. The Temple.



1. Gates into outer court (3), xl. 6.
2. Chambers in outer court (30), xl. 17.
3. Pavement, xl. 18.
4. Gates into inner court (3), xl. 28.
5. Altar of burnt offering, xliii. 13.
6. 'Separate place,' xli. 10.
7. Larger blocks. containing priests' chambers, xlii. 1.
8. Smaller do., xlii. 1.
9. Priests' kitchens (? 2), xlvi. 19.
10. Hinder building, xli. 12.
11. Chambers for priests (2), xl. 44.
12. People's kitchens (4), xlvi. 21.
13. Priests' steps from outer to inner court, xlii. 9.

At 14 are shown the positions of the sacrificial tables at the east inner gate, xl. 41.

The dotted line *a* . . . *b* represents the course of the temple stream, xlvii. 1.

Ezekiel does not mention whether there was any wall corresponding to the conjectural line *c-d-e-f*.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET

EZEKIEL

Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth 1

Part I.

Section I. The Prophet's Call (i–iii).

Chapter i, after a brief introduction, describes the vision which preluded Ezekiel's whole prophetic activity. Isaiah and Jeremiah each saw a vision of Yahweh (Isa. vi. 1; Jer. i. 20), and Amos begins his prophecies with what may have been a direct 'vision' (it must be remembered that the word 'vision' always includes hearing as well as sight: cf. Mic. i. 1). Isaiah's vision reminds us also of that of Micaiah the son of Imlah (1 Kings xxii. 17 ff.). But in each of these cases the description suggests that the prophet has seen more than he will or can say (cf. 2 Cor. xii. 2); here Ezekiel is full even to prolixity. It is customary to find in this characteristic a mark of the decadence of prophecy. This is hardly fair; we do not call one poet less great than another because he describes at length what another only sketches or hints at; nor do we regard Dante, because of the fullness of his descriptions, as at a lower level than Milton. We see here in this first chapter exactly the same precise love of detail as in ch. xl. ff., or in ch. xxix. What was the origin of the vision? Did Ezekiel see in a trance exactly what he here describes? This is difficult to suppose, because the details show an obviously 'theological' purpose, and they are almost too complex to be worked out. On the other hand we can hardly set down the whole as a literary fiction; throughout the book Ezekiel makes a clear distinction between what he attributes to vision and what is left to waking consciousness. All the visions described by Ezekiel must be judged together. When we compare them, we find as characteristic of them all (1) a greater clearness and vividness than Ezekiel in other moments seems to command; (2) a precision of detail which surprises us in the description of a vision; and (3) the strict subordination of the parts to the prophet's hortatory purpose. All this points to the conclusion that the visions had a real origin in the prophet's abnormal experiences[1]: that their contents were

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[1] Cf. Stewart, J. A. (*Myths of Plato*): 'The effect of even the most sustained poetry is a succession of occasional lapses into the

month, in the fifth *day* of the month, as I was among the

suggested by what was already in his thoughts; that these thoughts gained a new sharpness of outline in his trance-consciousness, and that the description of the visions themselves would be influenced by the purpose for which he felt they had been given to him. Cf. introductory notes to chaps. xl–xlviii, pp. 26 ff.

What was the purpose, the lesson of this theophany? Its leading characters are majesty and mobility (contr. xliii. 7). The glory of God would naturally be prominent to any one who had pondered over the prophecies of Isaiah and the Book of Deuteronomy; the mobility of the throne-car which carried Yahweh's presence would as naturally impress one who had learnt to think of Yahweh's glory as filling the whole earth, and had felt, in exile, the special need for that glory to manifest itself outside Palestine. The details of the theophany are suggested partly by Isaiah's vision, partly by the appearance of God to Moses and the elders of Israel (Exod. xxiv), and partly by reminiscences of Solomon's Temple. Each detail has its special religious significance. In chap. x we have another account of the theophany, differing in several details. Such differences, if our account of the version is right, are perfectly natural.

i. 1–3. *Introduction and Title.*

1. At the very beginning of the book we are met by the question of editing. Verses 2 and 3 cannot be by the author of verse 1; against this is the change of person, the repetition, and the obvious connexion between verses 1 and 4. Ewald regarded verses 2 and 3 as a later insertion, Cornill as the original opening. Ezekiel himself in the rest of the book uniformly employs the first person, as in verse 1, while the dating of verse 3, unlike that of verse 1, is the dating of the rest of the book. Which is the addition, then, and how shall we account for it? The most probable explanation is that here, as elsewhere, we have a trace of the two recensions of the book (see Introd. p. 46), one embodied in the Massoretic text, and represented in our English translations; the other in the LXX. Here the two appear together. Of these two, the second (LXX) is the more direct and concise; hence, verse 1 would seem to belong to this recension, verses 2 and 3 being the introduction of a later editor to the book as

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state of dream-consciousness. . . . The more we habituate ourselves to the influence of the poets, the better are we likely to receive the message of the prophets.' Stewart thinks that Plato's 'myths' were actually spoken by Socrates with a special impressiveness of tone and gesture. Did Ezekiel describe his visions in this manner?

captives by the river Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. In the fifth *day* of the 2
month, which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin's

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a whole. What, then, of 'the thirtieth year'? No completely satisfactory suggestion has yet been made. The real date, as we know from verse 2, is 592 B.C. Ezekiel can hardly be using a Babylonian era, such as the accession of Nabopolassar (in 625 B.C.), nor that of Nebuchadnezzar (in 605 B.C.; 10×3 being mistaken for 10+3); nor, again, is it likely that he is dating his work from the discovery of Deuteronomy and the reform of Josiah, in 621 B.C. Bertholet has suggested that Ezekiel (or his editor) arrived at the number 30 by subtracting from 70 (the length of the exile as given by Jeremiah, xxv. 21) 40 (the length as given by Ezekiel himself, iv. 6). Is it possible, as Kraetzschmar and Budde suggest (though Davidson strongly opposes), that the prophet is really referring to his own age? if so, however, it must be admitted that no other prophet does this; and that the Hebrew as it stands now must have been slightly altered; further, his position among the exiles might seem to indicate a maturer age (cf. note on verse 3).

the captives: R.V. marg. 'captivity.' The use of this expression, as also the word 'among,' shows that the exiles had already formed a definite social community of their own. See Introd. p. 15. Of this community Ezekiel would appear to be a member: cf. iii. 15, viii. 1, xiv. 1, &c.

the river Chebar: this is not to be identified with the Chaboras (in Northern Mesopotamia), to which the exiles from the Northern Kingdom were carried in 722 B.C. (2 Kings xvii. 6, xviii. 11; 1 Chron. v. 26, 'Habor'); this would conflict with 'the land of the Chaldaeans' (verse 3). Probably it was merely one of the numerous canals of the country. A large canal near Nippur or Niffer was called the Ka-ba-ri (the 'Grand Canal'), possibly the present Shatt-en-Nil, 120 feet wide, close to which were discovered the archives of the wealthy banking house of Murašû and Sons (dated 464 to 405 B.C.), which contain many Jewish names.

the heavens were opened: cf. Matt. iii. 16; John i. 51; also Rev. iv. 1, xix. 11. The visions in the Apocalypse are full of reminiscences of Ezekiel.

2. All the time reckonings in the rest of the book follow that of this verse, i.e. the dates are reckoned from the 'captivity.' Does this mean the actual conquest of the city at the close of the three months' reign of Jehoiachin (in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings xxiv. 12)? The safest starting-point is the fall of the city, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah and the nineteenth of Nebuchad-

3 captivity, the word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the
4 LORD was there upon him. And I looked, and, behold,

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nezzar; i. e. 586 (July) : see Chronological Table, note 2. The siege lasted a year and seven months (2 Kings xxv. 1, 8) ; i. e. it commenced in the ninth year, tenth month (*loc. cit.*, and Ezek. xxiv. 1) ; i. e. Jan. 587 ; hence (if we may insert in this verse, which omits the number of the month, 'in the fourth month' from verse 1) the date here given will be July 592. The captivity itself will then be dated March 596, which (since 2 Kings xxv. 1 = Ezek. xxiv. 1) will be the actual date of Zedekiah's accession. For this captivity, see Introd. p. 13. Although Jerusalem survived the blow, it was really a far more important event than the captivity which followed the city's fall; it would also naturally be '*the* captivity' to those who had then been deported. (The number of captives deported in 597 was 3,320 ; in 586, only 832 : see Jer. lii. 28.) Thirteen dates are given by Ezekiel in the course of the book; we are not justified in taking it for granted that all the prophecies which are placed at present between any two dates were actually delivered in that interval; but most if not all the dates evidently mark turning-points or transitions in the prophecies.

3. the word of the LORD. The expression regularly includes what is seen as well as what is heard.

came expressly. A phrase, not elsewhere employed by Ezekiel, which denotes the impressiveness of this experience.

Ezekiel. The name means 'God is strong.' Neither Ezekiel nor Buzi are mentioned elsewhere. The words 'the priest,' as far as the Hebrew goes, may be joined either to Ezekiel or to Buzi. Whether Ezekiel was too young to have exercised priestly functions himself or not, his whole attitude shows that he came of a priestly family, and that he belonged further to the Jerusalem priesthood, the family of Zadok (chaps. xl. 46, xliii. 19, xliv. 15) ; he must also have been perfectly familiar with the temple and its sacrifices. For deciding his age (see on verse 1) we have no sufficient grounds; but it may be pointed out that though the last nine chapters of the book are dated twenty years later than this, there are no signs of old age there. He would not, at this time, be much older than forty, and therefore he could not long have acted as priest in Jerusalem in any case.

the hand of the LORD was upon me: almost a technical term in this book, denoting a condition more or less approaching ecstasy; it occurs again in iii. 14, 22, viii. 1, xxxiii. 22, xxxvii. 1, a stormy wind came out of the north, a great cloud, with a fire infolding itself, and a brightness round about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire. And out of the midst thereof 5

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xl. 1. The phrase also occurs, but without any suggestion of ecstasy, in Isa. viii. 11.

i. 4–14. *The vision of the living creatures and the chariot.*

4. The LXX has a slightly simpler order; the wind, the clouds, the light, the fire like lightning, and the appearance of amber in the midst of it. The sight gradually gains in distinctness before the prophet. Compare the accounts of St. Paul's visions in Acts ix, xxii, xxvi.

a stormy wind. Yahweh is constantly connected with storm and cloud; cf. especially Ps. xxix, Exod. ix. 24, Judges v. 4 and Ps. xviii. 7 ff.

the north. It has been suggested that Ezekiel is here thinking of Assyrian mythology, which placed the abode of the gods in the north, or of the dim region of gloom and wrath from which Gog is to emerge in chap. xxxviii; the former may possibly be alluded to in Ps. xlviii. 2, but hardly here. Ezekiel makes many mythological references, but he keeps them carefully within the region of poetry (see on next verse). D. H. Müller points out that the road from Palestine would reach Babylonia via the north of the Syrian desert; but this is surely an even less happy suggestion. Would Yahweh's chariot travel down the great caravan roads? Probably the wind which threw Ezekiel into his trance really did blow from the north. The significance for Ezekiel was that Jerusalem was now doomed to be deserted; although the hand of Yahweh could carry him thither again before the city was finally left.

amber, or as R. V. marg. 'electrum.' The Hebrew is *chasmal.* The word is generally explained as denoting a mixture of gold and silver. Thothmes mentions 'asmal' as taken in tribute from Mesopotamia. The Babylonian 'ešmarû' is used for the material which covers the floor of the divine chambers. The word occurs also in i. 27 and viii. 2. Delitzsch compares the Old French *émail,* which, however, has quite a different origin, and is connected with our own word 'smelt.'

out of the midst of the fire. Possibly a gloss; such repetitions are very frequent in Ezekiel; but it is easier to put them down as glosses than to understand how they could be inserted, unless we may assume that a peculiar love of fullness of expression was characteristic of the editor of the later recension.

came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was
6 their appearance; they had the likeness of a man. And
every one had four faces, and every one of them had four

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5. four living creatures. After the natural phenomena Ezekiel sees what is supernatural. The frequency of the words 'likeness,' 'appearance' is noteworthy through this chapter. Cf. 'What seemed his head the likeness of a kingly crown had on.' Ezekiel is anxious to avoid anything implying that Yahweh could be material; a similar anxiety has removed all traces of 'anthropomorphism' from the later or 'Priestly' history of Jewish origins. In chaps. ix and x these living creatures (cf. Rev. iv. 6) are called cherubim. Cheyne thinks this implies that Ezekiel did not recognize them to be cherubim till he was told, and that they were therefore different from the traditional cherubim, referred to in chap. xxviii and represented in the temples both of Solomon and of Ezekiel himself (1 Kings vi. 24; Ezek. xli. 18). These living creatures have often been compared to the twiformed animals of Assyrian mythology; but the care with which Ezekiel describes them, and the symbolism of every feature, shows that at most the gigantic Assyrian man-headed bulls or eagle-headed men gave him no more than suggestions for his conception. The reader may recall Ruskin's description of the 'true' and 'false' griffin in *Modern Painters*, part IV, chap. viii. § 13; in the *Commedia, Purgatorio* xxix, Dante models his description of the living creatures who surrounded the gryphon's car partly from this chapter, partly from Rev. iv. 7 ff.

of a man. Toy has suggested that the true reading should be 'they had forms of one kind.' It is better to take the text as we have it, and to understand that Ezekiel means to emphasize the human rather than the animal character of the bearers of Yahweh's chariot.

6. Ezekiel keeps clearly before us the squareness of the chariot and of its bearers, as later on of the temple. In Solomon's and Ezekiel's temples the cherubim have but two faces; but it would seem that here everything connected with the glory of God must face all sides alike. By using the dual for 'wings,' the Hebrew is able to show that the wings went in pairs, which Jahn would interpret as meaning that there were four pairs of wings, i. e. eight in all, to each creature. Ezekiel would surely have expressed so curious a meaning in a clearer fashion; and we should have to credit the seraphs in Isa. vi. 2 with twelve wings apiece.

7. The number of feet is not mentioned. Davidson suggests two; Kraetzschmar, one each; so that the chariot would have four supports in all. The word 'feet' here stands for 'legs'; the

wings. And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of 7
their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot: and they
sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. And they 8
had the hands of a man under their wings on their four
sides: and they four had their faces and their wings *thus*;
their wings were joined one to another; they turned not 9
when they went; they went every one straight forward.
As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a 10
man; and they four had the face of a lion on the right
side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side;
they four had also the face of an eagle. And their faces 11
and their wings were separate above; two *wings* of every

legs have no joints, as they move without bending; the 'soles' are like those of calves, i. e. rounded, for turning smoothly in every direction. Yahweh must be entirely unimpeded in his own movements.

8, 9. The description is not clear. For 8^b and 9 the LXX has simply 'the faces of the four did not turn as they went; each went straight forward.' It is not easy to see what would be meant by the turning of the wings. Apparently, each of the four creatures was in the centre of a side of the square, with two wings on either side; the wings of the creatures would meet at the corners of the square; so in verse 11. See Plan G.

10. The human face is the most important. Why were these three animals chosen? Jeremias points out that four great Babylonian deities—Marduk, Nebo, Nergal, and Ninib—were represented by an ox, a man, a lion, and an eagle respectively. Such animal figures would be among the most likely to occur, in any case, to an inhabitant of Babylon; a similar combination, however, is found in Solomon's temple (1 Kings vii. 29). If the human face was on the outside, that of the eagle would be on the inside, and hardly seen; the other two would be seen in profile. In Indian mythology, an eagle accompanies Vishnu, a bull Siva.

11. Cf. Isa. vi. 2; in the case of each creature two wings are stretched out; in Isaiah's vision four wings cover different parts of the body, here only two; the wings of the four living creatures would join at the tips. It can hardly be doubted that Ezekiel is here influenced by his memories of Solomon's temple. In the inner shrine, a cube of 20 cubits or 35 feet[1] (1 Kings vi. 23-8),

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[1] Reckoning the cubit at 21 inches: see note on xl. 5.

one were joined one to another, and two covered their
12 bodies. And they went every one straight forward:
whither the spirit was to go, they went; they turned not
13 when they went. As for the likeness of the living

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was the ark, and on either side of the ark stood a colossal cherub, 10 cubits high; one of his outspread wings (5 cubits long) touched the wall of the shrine; the other, just over the ark, met the wing of the other cherub; the two figures thus formed a sort of screen right across the shrine. (In the tabernacle, the ark was said to be surmounted by two small cherubs, Exod. xxv. 20.) In Ezekiel's vision, wherein Yahweh has left the temple, the chariot has taken the place of the ark[1]; but the cherubs are still brought into the closest possible connexion with it; and instead of two standing side by side, Ezekiel sees four at right angles to each other. If the figures preserve the dimensions already familiar to Ezekiel, each side of the square chariot will be 10 cubits, or nearly 18 feet long. Cf. Ps. xviii. 10; notes on ix. 3, x. 20, and W. T. Davison's excursus on the Cherubim in CENTURY BIBLE, *Psalms*, vol. i. p. 361.

12. straight forward. The chariot can thus only move at right angles, not diagonally (cf. verse 9); since the chariot is supported by four creatures, every one of which has four faces, there can, strictly speaking, be neither backwards nor forwards nor sideways in its movement.

the spirit. The same word means also wind. (Cf. 'The wind was in their wings,' Zech. v. 9.) Here, however, the reference is certainly to the Spirit, or active principle of God's existence. (See A. B. Davidson's *Old Testament Theology*, pp. 120 f.) Ezekiel gives special prominence to the Spirit; he is himself transported by the Spirit from one place to another (iii. 12, 24, viii. 3, xxxvii. 1, xliii. 5), and by the wind he expresses the life-giving Spirit which turns dry bones into a living army. Here, God's own Spirit, like wind, guides the chariot. Cf. John iii. 8.

13. likeness. 'Likeness,' or 'appearance,' must be wrong. The text of LXX (in R. V. margin), 'in the midst of the living creatures was an appearance,' &c., is to be preferred. Cf. x. 2, 6. Another reminiscence of Isaiah's vision. The chariot has within it what appear to be coals, as if it were an altar. For the movement of fire, compare the 'flaming sword' of the cherubim, in creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches; it went up and down among the living creatures: and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living 14 creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning. Now as I beheld the living creatures, 15 behold one wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for each of the four faces thereof. The appearance 16 of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their

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[1] It has recently been suggested that the ark, which is never heard of after the destruction of Jerusalem, was regarded as Yahweh's throne within the temple; the older view that the ark was a wooden chest is probably correct, but this is not inconsistent with the conception of a seat, on which Yahweh is enthroned between the cherubs.

Gen. iii. 24; for fire as accompanying the theophany, cf. Ps. xviii. 13.

14. This verse is omitted in LXX. It adds little to the description, and the word for 'lightning' does not occur elsewhere (in verse 13 the word employed is the regular one); it is not unlike an Arabic or Persian word for a kind of hawk. The word for 'ran' is also non existent elsewhere. The whole verse reads like a late addition based on a misunderstanding of verse 13.

i. 15-21. *The wheels.* The difficulty of harmonizing each part of the description with the rest is natural if Ezekiel is describing each part of the vision as it entered into his trance-consciousness.

15. wheels. A new element in the vision. Nothing corresponding to these was seen by Isaiah; but it may be that Ezekiel was influenced by reminiscences of the vessels or 'bases' of bronze in Solomon's temple, on the borders of which were lions, oxen, and cherubim, and each of which had four bronze wheels (1 Kings vii. 27-30). In the Book of Enoch (lxi. 10, lxx. 7) the 'Ophannim' (wheels) stand next to the Cherubim and Seraphim in the presence of God.

faces. LXX has 'for the four of them.' The Hebrew has 'for its four faces.' This may be because the four creatures are here thought of as one (Smend), or the mistake may have arisen from reading, as the last letter in this verse, what was originally the first letter, the copula, in the next. See note on verse 16.

16. The repeated 'appearance' and 'work' are strange, as also is 'work' in the first clause; in the last it means 'arrangement' or 'plan,' as in 1 Kings vii. 28. LXX omits 'work' in the first case and 'appearance' in the second.

beryl: *lit.* 'the eye of Tarshish,' generally identified with the chrysolite, which corresponds to our topaz; it occurs again in xxviii. 13.

appearance and their work was as it were a wheel within
17 a wheel. When they went, they went upon their four
18 sides: they turned not when they went. As for their
rings, they were high and dreadful; and they four had
19 their rings full of eyes round about. And when the living
creatures went, the wheels went beside them: and when
the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the
20 wheels were lifted up. Whithersoever the spirit was to go,
they went; thither was the spirit to go: and the wheels
were lifted up beside them; for the spirit of the living
21 creature was in the wheels. When those went, these

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a wheel within a wheel: more literally, 'as if the wheel should be in the midst of the wheel'; i.e. 'the wheels were arranged as if one wheel were inside the other.' What is meant by this? Probably, as Davidson suggests, each wheel was really double; four wheels would thus be running in whatever direction the chariot moved. Smend thinks the wheels seemed to be inside each other when seen in perspective; i. e. the rim of one wheel would touch not the rim but the inner part (between rim and axle) of the wheel at right angles to it. This conflicts with the definite squareness of the whole conception as well as being a mechanical impossibility. From whichever side you look, the wheel opposite seems to contain the wheel at right angles to it. Verse 17 states the necessary consequence of verse 12. There is a reminiscence of this passage in Dan. vii. 9. See Plan G.

18. Literally, 'and their felloes, and height was theirs, and fear was theirs.' For 'fear' the LXX reads with slight change of letters, 'I saw.'

eyes, to show the wheels where to go; the general direction is given by the Spirit (verses 12 and 20).

20. the spirit. Cf. v. 12. The text is again probably too full.

the spirit of the living creature: LXX as R. V. margin, 'of life,' which is less probably the meaning of the Hebrew. The phrase might be used collectively (cf. note on verse 15), or better, of one of them standing for all. Ezekiel would naturally see only one at a time with any clearness. Kraetzschmar suggests here and in x. 17, 'the spirit of one thing,' as emphasizing the unity of the whole. The singular occurs also in verse 22. We might translate simply, with Jahn, 'a living spirit.'

21. A further instance of the fullness of the text, appearing in a shorter form in the LXX.

went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up beside them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And over the head of the living creature 22 there was the likeness of a firmament, like the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above. And under the firmament were their wings 23 straight, the one toward the other: every one had two which covered on this side, and every one had two which covered on that side, their bodies. And when they went, 24 I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a noise of tumult like the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings. And there was a voice above the firmament 25

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i. 22–28. *The Throne and the Divine 'Appearance' thereon.*

22. likeness, as in verse 5, and throughout the chapter.

firmament: a platform, not used here in the technical sense, found in Gen. i. 6, of a circle dividing the upper from the lower waters. This platform is stretched over the heads, not the wings, since the wings sometimes bent down (verse 24).

terrible crystal. Is crystal 'terrible'? Delitzsch holds that, on the analogy of Assyrian, the word means 'ice'; so R. V. margin. In Exod. xxiv. 10 the pavement under God's feet is sapphire (see verse 26). Both ice and sapphire suggest the blue of Heaven. Ice might be called 'terrible' as suggesting the storms and desolation of the north (Job xxxvii. 22), or the text should be altered, with the LXX, to 'become visible,' as in x. 1.

23. This mention of the wings conflicts with verse 6, &c., and implies that each had six. LXX has merely 'in the case of each there were two wings covering their bodies,' which avoids the difficulty of 'on this side' and 'on that side,' or, as we should probably understand the Hebrew, 'to this creature' and 'to that.' Observe the skill with which Ezekiel preserves the reader's suspense as to what rests upon the platform.

24. Almighty. An archaic term for God, used chiefly in poetry; in Gen. xvii. 1, with El (God) prefixed.

For the 'voice of God' cf. Ps. xxix. 3; Job xxxvii. 4.

great waters: cf. xliii. 2, and Rev. i. 15. LXX omits the comparisons to the voice of God and the noise of battle.

that was over their heads: when they stood, they let down
26 their wings. And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above.
27 And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of his loins and upward; and from the appearance of his loins and downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and
28 there was brightness round about him. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the

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25. The second part of the verse is here out of place,—a mere repetition of the end of verse 24. Observe that the voice is heard before the appearance on the firmament is noted.

26. sapphire: see note on verse 22. The clear blue of the sapphire now emerges plainly from the darkness and fire of the storm-cloud. LXX reads 'above it' after 'throne,' suggesting that, as in Exod. xxiv. 10, the sapphire was the 'paved work.' In his insistence on 'likeness' in the vision of God, Ezekiel comes midway between the earlier narratives in the Pentateuch, where God is seen as clearly as a man, and the later ones where God Himself is not seen at all; and in x. 1 Ezekiel is silent as to the appearance of the Person on the throne.

27. colour of amber: *lit.* 'eye of amber' (cf. verse 16), apparently of the glowing brightness of the substance. On 'amber' see note on verse 4. The appearance is divided into two halves, above and below what would be the loins, had the figure been really human; below, fire; above, a clearer brightness. (Cf. Isa. vi. 1; the 'train,' with no definite contour.)

28. the bow that is in the cloud. The 'amber' would seem to flash in the glowing light with all the colours of the rainbow. To the Hebrew, as to the English reader, the rainbow recalls the covenant made with Noah. The 'bow' is only mentioned in the latest Pentateuchal narrative, but it was not therefore unknown to Ezekiel. Whether or not there is here a distant thought of Noah's covenant, the expression, like the whole verse, suggests calm after storm.

LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, 2

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one that spake. Is this Yahweh himself? In ii. 1, iii. 1. 4, we have 'he said unto me'; in iii. 16, the usual phrase 'the word of Yahweh came unto me, saying.' There is here, as in earlier parts of the O. T. (e. g. Judges ii. 1, vi. 11 and 14), no clear distinction between the angel (messenger or spokesman) of Yahweh and Yahweh himself, and the glory of Yahweh and Yahweh are practically synonymous. The reticence at the end of the verse is specially noteworthy after the fullness of the preceding details. In xliii. 6 ff. there is the same ambiguity as to the speaker (Yahweh, or the man?).

ii. 1-7. *The attitude in which the prophet is to approach the people.* This passage exhibits a striking likeness to the call of Isaiah and of Jeremiah. Amos had prefaced his message with words which imply that Yahweh's utterance will bring mourning and desolation. Isaiah, in striking language, is told in his vision in the temple to go and make the people unwilling and unable to hear him. Jeremiah, who describes no actual vision of Yahweh, first pleads his ignorance and youth, then learns that his mission is both destructive and constructive, and then, after seeing an almond-tree and a caldron facing the north, is sent as a foe to the city which, he is told, has been rebellious from the beginning. Mention is made of Ezekiel's inexperience, but he is warned against a natural shrinking from the words and also the looks of his hearers; the characteristic expression 'a rebellious house' tolls like a knell through the chapter, and the repeated phrase, 'whether they will hear or whether they will forbear,' suggests that he, like Isaiah, is simply to give his message, but is not responsible for its effect—a thought which does not occur in Isaiah, but is fully worked out later by Ezekiel (chap. xxxiii). The whole passage shows first that, while Ezekiel had pondered over the call of his predecessors, his experience was his own; and secondly that, harsh as his message might seem, he himself was by no means devoid of feeling.

1. he. See note on i. 28. Yahweh himself has not yet been mentioned, but the pronoun can refer to no one else.

Son of man. An expression almost peculiar, in the O. T., to Ezekiel, but used by him nearly 100 times. The Hebrew word here used for 'man' means 'human being'; 'son' expresses regularly, in Hebrew, an individual member of a class; hence, the best translation would be simply 'man.' Its use emphasizes

2 and I will speak with thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet;
3 and I heard him that spake unto me. And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to nations that are rebellious, which have rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me,
4 even unto this very day. And the children are impudent

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the distance at which Ezekiel feels himself to stand before Yahweh, and is quite in accord with Ezekiel's 'Calvinistic' view of the unconditioned supremacy of Yahweh. In Amos vii. 8, viii. 2, and Jer. i. 11, Yahweh addresses the prophets by name. The meaning of the phrase in Dan. viii. 17 is the same as here. In Dan. vii. 13, it marks the contrast between the human and the animal character of the different sovereignties described. In Ps. viii. 5 and Job xxv. 6 the contrast is between the insignificance of man and the strength of God; the same is true of Isa. li. 12. Delitzsch suggests that just as in Babylonian phraseology 'son of no one' is used of a slave, 'son of man' may denote here a free man, or person of importance; this hardly needs refutation. The term is used in Enoch in a distinctly Messianic sense. Did Ezekiel's use influence Christ's own use of the term for Himself? Probably Christ's hearers would understand the term as Ezekiel had used it, while to Christ Himself it would signify the truth expressed in Matt. xix. 30 and Luke xxii. 27; cf. Adeney's *St. Luke* (CENTURY BIBLE), p. 182.

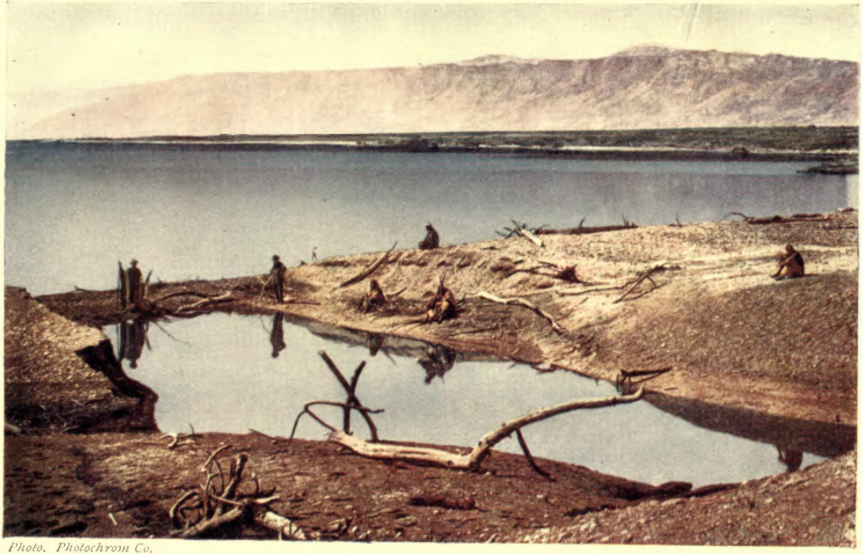
stand. Cf. Dan. x. 11. Here rather as a slave before his master.

2. Again, the spirit is the activity of Yahweh in the world,—in Ezekiel, as in the chariot. Ezekiel is himself overpowered by the vision. The word translated by 'spake' is peculiar in form, and denotes the special dignity of the speaker.

3. nations. This expression generally denotes the heathen, as opposed to Israel. Are the two kingdoms of Israel meant? Ezekiel nowhere refers to the Northern Kingdom (which had been destroyed for 130 years) except to prophesy its ultimate restoration to Judah. LXX omits the word; if it is retained, it should be altered to the singular.

rebellious. A very common phrase with Ezekiel. To him the constant tendency to rebel against Babylon, culminating in Zedekiah's desperate revolt, is typical of the whole attitude of Israel to Yahweh. See the full development of this conception in chaps. xvi, xx, xxiii. The sinfulness of the present is really at one with the sinfulness of the past, the 'fathers.'

4. impudent: *lit.* 'hard of face': cf. the common expression



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THE SALT SEA

and stiffhearted; I do send thee unto them: and thou
shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD. And 5
they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear,
(for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there
hath been a prophet among them. And thou, son of 6
man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their
words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou
dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words,
nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious
house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them, 7
whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for
they are most rebellious. But thou, son of man, hear 8

'stiff-necked,' 'stiff-hearted'; so Yahweh is said to harden Pharaoh's heart (Exod. vii. 3, &c.).

Thus saith, &c.: the usual introductory formula of a prophet's address; the spirit of Ezekiel's addresses is sufficiently defined by the preceding words.

the Lord GOD: *lit.* the Lord Yahweh (in our versions LORD is always the translation of 'Yahweh'). Ezekiel uses this fuller phrase a little oftener than the simple 'Yahweh.' In the last nine chapters Ezekiel also uses the expression, Yahweh Elohim, which occurs elsewhere in the O. T. only in Gen. ii and iii.

5. whether they will hear, &c. This is the first suggestion of the problem of individual freedom and responsibility which is worked out at length in chaps. iii, xviii, xxxiii.

hath been. Ezekiel may not influence the people by his preaching, but his presence will be remembered after he has gone from their midst. The phrase recalls Deut. xviii. 21, 22.

6. briers and thorns. Cf. xxviii. 24, and the similar encouragement in Jer. i. 8, 17.

ii. 8—iii. 3. *The Inspiration of the Prophet.* In Jer. i. 9, after Jeremiah has received his instructions, Yahweh touches the prophet's mouth, saying, 'I have put my words in thy mouth.' Isaiah's lips had been touched by the glowing stone from the altar (Isa. vi. 7). Ezekiel's experience, like his vision, is fuller: he is given a roll, which he is made first to eat and then to read. What is the actual experience which this account represents? The following chapters are full of occurrences and actions which it seems difficult or (as here) impossible to interpret literally; on the other hand, if they are merely picturesque descriptions of purely mental

what I say unto thee; be not thou rebellious like that
rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give
9 thee. And when I looked, behold, an hand was put
10 forth unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein; and
he spread it before me; and it was written within and
without: and there was written therein lamentations, and
3 mourning, and woe. And he said unto me, Son of man,
eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go, speak unto
2 the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he

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and normal states, the detail is strangely over-elaborate. The matter is discussed more fully on iv. 1; here it is enough to suggest that Ezekiel is still in a trance-like state; the same may, doubtless, have been the case with Jeremiah.

8. be not . . . rebellious. Ezekiel is to be different from his countrymen, and not to shrink from a difficult task, as they had done.

open thy mouth. Ezekiel first sees the proffered roll closed; but he is made to see its contents before it is actually devoured. In Rev. x. 9 the seer notices a 'little book' open in the angel's hand, and is told to eat it, finding it sweet in his mouth, like Ezekiel, and bitter in his belly.

9. Ezekiel instinctively avoids saying 'Yahweh's hand'; see note on i. 28. Smend sees an appropriateness in the fact that a roll is given to one who was a writer and law-giver rather than a prophet. But Ezekiel would not have forgotten the destruction of Jeremiah's roll, and there is nothing to imply that he thought of his own vision as different; his 'dumbness' is only partial, and there is no mention of his writing. On the other hand, he has learnt reverence for a book in the inspired code of Deuteronomy; and the existence of the roll also marks a less intimate relation between Yahweh and his prophet than that of which Isaiah and Jeremiah were conscious. The 'flying' roll forms the material of one of the visions of Zechariah (v. 1).

10. within and without. The tables of stone were engraved on both sides (Exod. xxxii. 15). The contents of the roll are a further sign that the passage is not the result of the reflection of a later period in the prophet's life. He has to speak of much besides mourning and lamentation; only half his work is purely destructive; but Ezekiel is as yet quite unconscious of the second half of his prophetic activity, and the first impression of his message is one of unmitigated disaster; the roll is not only written inside, but (so long-drawn are the laments) on the cover as well.

caused me to eat the roll. And he said unto me, Son of 3
man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this
roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in
my mouth as honey for sweetness.

And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto 4
the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.
For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech and 5
of an hard language, but to the house of Israel; not to 6
many peoples of a strange speech and of an hard language,
whose words thou canst not understand. Surely, if I
sent thee to them, they would hearken unto thee. But 7
the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they
will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are
of an hard forehead and of a stiff heart. Behold, I have 8
made thy face hard against their faces, and thy forehead
hard against their foreheads. As an adamant harder 9

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iii. 3. Why was the roll sweet? Not because of its contents (ii. 10). The Hebrew properly means 'like a sweet thing, as honey.' The manna tasted like wafers made with honey (Exod. xvi. 31). The sweetness of the roll results from its being God's gift. The suggestion that the phrase denotes Ezekiel's eager and willing devotion seems less probable.

iii. 4-11. That the prophet may be neither disappointed nor discouraged afterwards, he is told in the plainest language of the imperiousness of his countrymen, and the strength which was to be given to him. There is equal implicitness in the charges given to Isaiah and Jeremiah. The passage characteristically repeats the thought of ii. 3, 7, with the addition of the single thought that refusal to hear will not have the excuse of a foreign language.

5. strange speech: *lit.* as R. V. marg. 'deep of lip': cf. Exod. iv. 10, and Isa. xxxiii. 19 (of the Assyrians). The speech of foreigners sounds like mumbling or stammering; in trying to be understood one instinctively raises the voice.

6. they would hearken: the most galling thought to a Jew: cf. xvi. 48, 51, and Christ's words on Sodom, Nineveh, and Tyre (Matt. xi. 21 and xii. 41). The same thought may have been present to the author of the book of Jonah in his description of the speedy repentance of Nineveh, contrasted with the disobedience of the prophet and of the nation which the prophet there represents.

than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not,
neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a re-
10 bellious house. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man,
all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine
11 heart, and hear with thine ears. And go, get thee to
them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people,
and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord
God; whether they will hear, or whether they will
forbear.

12 Then the spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me
the voice of a great rushing, *saying*, Blessed be the glory
13 of the Lord from his place. And *I heard* the noise of
the wings of the living creatures as they touched one
another, and the noise of the wheels beside them, even
14 the noise of a great rushing. So the spirit lifted me up,
and took me away: and I went in bitterness, in the heat
of my spirit, and the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.

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11. people: a word almost confined to Yahweh's chosen nation. For Ezekiel there is a further bitterness in 'thy people.'

iii. 12–15. *The conclusion of the trance.*

12. lifted me up: as the wind might lift a leaf.

Blessed be the glory, &c. The text is difficult, from the omission in the Hebrew of a word for 'saying,' and the fact that elsewhere Yahweh is blessed, and not his glory, as well as from the difficult expression 'from his place.' The LXX gives no help; but a slight change would yield 'when the glory of Yahweh rose from his place,' which later scribes might easily think dangerously anthropomorphic.

13. The wings are now spread out, and the wheels begin to move, with a sound like thunder. Observe the brevity of the description of Yahweh's departure.

14. took me away. After this we should have expected 'and brought me to Tel-abib'; but, as it would seem, on coming out of the trance-state, Ezekiel finds himself on the way to Tel-abib. Though the chariot has gone, Ezekiel can still feel Yahweh's hand on him in the oppression of his mind.

in bitterness: in verse 15 the LXX inserts 'uplifted,' in a state of exaltation, omitting 'in bitterness' here. But the reading

Then I came to them of the captivity at Tel-abib, that 15
dwelt by the river Chebar, and to where they dwelt; and
I sat there astonied among them seven days.

And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that 16

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of the Hebrew text is surely better, as denoting the natural reaction combined with the prophet's consciousness of the overwhelming difficulty of his task. Ezekiel's sensitive and emotional nature is specially likely to feel both bitterness and also 'heat' or excitement of spirit.

15. The Hebrew here is awkward; probably the redundancy is an error, and we should read 'and I came to the exiles to Tel-abib, by the river Chebar, where they lived.' We cannot tell whether Ezekiel's home was here, unless Smend is right in holding that Tel-abib was the single colony of the exiles. The word in Assyrian means 'hill of flood,' or 'of storm.' Possibly it might be, as Kraetzschmar suggests, the name of a region of sand-hills, which the Hebrew exiles were turning into a hill (as the word would sound to Hebrew ears) of corn. The spot cannot now be identified.

iii. 16–21. *The responsibility of the hearer.* Ezekiel here takes up the thought which was suggested in ii. 5, &c., and which is elaborated in chaps. xiv, xviii, xxxiii; the same conception is discussed in each passage—here, from the point of view of the watchman; in chap. xiv of foreign cults; and in chaps. xviii and xxxiii of the death of the sinner. The fullest exposition is found in chap. xxxiii; for which iii. 16–21 reads like a preliminary study (iii. 16 = xxxiii. 1–6; iii. 17–19 = xxxiii. 7–9); verses 20, 21 (cf. xviii. 24, xxxiii. 12–18) have nothing quite corresponding to them in their insistence on the need for the righteous man to be warned lest he fall into sin. The possibility, both of 'conversion' and of 'falling from grace,' is here clearly stated. Had Ezekiel any concrete examples in his mind? In Chronicles, Manasseh's repentance and forgiveness are described (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11–13), and Josiah's death is attributed to an earlier sin (2 Chron. xxxv. 22). The narrative in Kings is silent on both these subjects, but the tradition of the former and the view which caused the mention of the latter may easily have been familiar to Ezekiel. We can hardly say that as yet the problem of individual responsibility has risen before Ezekiel in all its difficulty; he is thinking much more of his own responsibilities than the moral freedom of man in general from the effects of the sins of his own past life and of his ancestors. See notes on xiv. 18–33.

16. In the Hebrew text a lacuna is marked in the middle of the verse after 'seven days'; there is, however, no obvious omission.

17 the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, I
have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel:
therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them
18 warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou
shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor
speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to
save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his
19 iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet
if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his
wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his
20 iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, when
a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and
commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him,
he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he

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17. watchman. This is a new name for the prophet; but the main function of previous prophets had been to warn sinners of the inevitable results of their sin, and to proclaim the reward brought by a return to Yahweh (cf. Isa. i. 17); and to forecast the future in this way meant also to interpret the present.

18. It is significant that the first message suggested to Ezekiel is the solemn 'thou shalt surely die.' But in spite of this categorical future, the sentence is obviously meant to be understood as conditional—'if thou dost not repent' (cf. xxxiii. 13). This possibility of repentance is always left open, although since Yahweh is considered as the cause of every event, refusal to repent, as in Exod. ix. 12 (contrast Exod. vii. 13, viii. 19-32) and Isa. vi. 10, may be attributed to the action of Yahweh or his prophet. The earlier expression, 'it repented Yahweh of the evil,' Ezekiel's discussion definitely transcends.

blood: as elsewhere, the blood stands for the life. The wicked must die; but the careless watchman is really his murderer.

19. To complete the parallel with the temptation of the righteous Ezekiel should have added to this verse the case of the successful warning of the wicked (cf. v. 21).

delivered thy soul, or life, from the guilt of murder.

20. I lay a stumblingblock. In these words a problem is suggested which Ezekiel never fully realizes. In chap. xviii the principle is stated, 'The soul that sinneth it shall die.' But does God

shall die in his sin, and his righteous deeds which he hath
done shall not be remembered ; but his blood will I require
at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous 21
man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he
shall surely live, because he took warning ; and thou hast
delivered thy soul.

And the hand of the LORD was there upon me ; and 22

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tempt to evil? In that case, if there is no watchman at the time, does not the real responsibility for the sinner's ruin rest with God? The answer of the N. T. is explicit (Jas. i. 13) ; but the Jew, recognizing that temptations do come, and (as it seems) from outside the man himself, had no alternative (until he came to think of 'the Satan') to attributing them to God. Cf. Jer. vi. 21 ; also 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, contrasted with 1 Chron. xxi. 1.

iii. 22–27. *The closing of the Prophet's lips.* Some omission has often been suspected at the end of verse 21. Either after the seven days were over (verse 15), or after this further message, we might have expected that some pastoral work would be done. But no addition is necessary. For this postponement of practical work, parallels may be found in Paul's three years in Arabia (which delayed at all events the main activity of his life) and the forty days of retirement after the baptism of Jesus. That Ezekiel should be held back, when on the point of speaking, by further messages as well as by dumbness (verse 26) is perfectly natural. Ezekiel sees once more Yahweh's glory ; whether the vision of the chariot came to him in all its details is not stated, though verse 23 implies it. He is then told to shut himself in his house ; his fellow exiles will 'lay hands' on him, and he is to be dumb, so as to be unable to reprove or act as a watchman ; this silence is to end with some fresh message from Yahweh, and Ezekiel's speech will then begin with an echo of the already familiar words, 'whether they will hear, or,' &c.

This short passage may be taken as either the close of the first section of this part of the book, or the opening of the second. The actual public work of the prophet begins with the next chapter ; but Yahweh's words continue without break from chap. iii to chap. iv. That an interval of time is possible, however, is clear from the way in which v. 1 follows iv. 17. Is there an interval also between verses 21 and 22? No date is specified between i. 1 and viii. 1 ; but it is still quite possible that the events and messages from iii. 16 to vii. 27 belong to different occasions in the interval.

he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will
23 there talk with thee. Then I arose, and went forth into
the plain: and, behold, the glory of the LORD stood there,
as the glory which I saw by the river Chebar: and I fell
24 on my face. Then the spirit entered into me, and set me
upon my feet; and he spake with me, and said unto me,
25 Go, shut thyself within thine house. But thou, son of
man, behold, they shall lay bands upon thee, and shall
bind thee with them, and thou shalt not go out among
26 them: and I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of
thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to

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22. plain: R.V. marg. 'valley': the more low-lying country as opposed to Tel-abib. Verse 23 shows it to be a different spot to that where Ezekiel saw the vision of chap. i.

23. the glory of the LORD. This is seen again in viii. 2, 4 (see notes); no reference is made there, or here, to the chariot, which is part of the vision in chaps. ix and x, and also, since the glory moves, in chap. xliii. On the other hand, what had been seen once would be likely to be seen, or recalled, on the reappearance of any part of it.

24. The result of this confinement is clear from the accounts of the visits of the 'elders' in chaps. viii, xiv.

25. lay bands. How was this done? Do the words refer to some unrecorded outburst of fury after Ezekiel's first preaching? Chap. iv. 8 suggests the slight change necessary to give the reading 'I have bound' for 'they will bind' (the so-called perfect of confidence); in this way also verse 26 follows verse 25 more naturally.

26. What was the reason for this dumbness? Evidently Israel had gone too far in sin for reproof to be of any use. They were not prevented from hearing the words sent to them; no word was to be sent. But does this not contradict verses 16-21? Smend suggests that Ezekiel had attempted to carry out the duty laid on him in those verses, and had failed. Kraetzschmar holds that verse 17 is a later addition. This can neither be disproved nor proved; but the prophet, as subsequent chapters show, was certainly still a watchman, though, as it would seem, intermittently.

What, then, was the nature of the 'dumbness'? Is it the result of some nervous disease (see on iv. 4)? No attacks of such dumbness are mentioned, and the 'opening of the prophet's mouth' in

them a reprover: for they are a rebellious house. But 27
when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou
shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: He that
heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him
forbear: for they are a rebellious house.

Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it 4

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xxxiii. 22 (cf. xxiv. 27) implies a resumption of activities in public. In the intervening chapters the prophet speaks unhindered, but not, like his predecessors, in public. Jeremiah was practically dumb, in the sense of being debarred from effective public speech, through much of his ministry. R. G. Moulton has suggested that, unlike other prophets, Ezekiel had to wait for the actual moment of inspiration; but there is nothing to show that he differed from others in this respect. Jahn holds the dumbness to consist in the lack of result in Ezekiel's preaching, which he compares with that of Isaiah and of Jesus; but no one could speak of them as dumb. The 'dumbness' was probably neither wholly physical nor wholly mental. The shock implied in verse 25 would mean an access of nervousness at the thought of again facing the exiles publicly, which would literally, in the case of one so sensitive as Ezekiel, 'tie his tongue.' Similar instances of the combination of the mental and physical are often observed in connexion with stammering.

SECTION II. FIRST CYCLE OF THREATS (iv. 1–vii. 27).

These chapters form one long cry of doom, unrelenting and even fierce; the words of the prophet simply echo the anger of one from whom all pity has been driven; only in chap. vii (in the reiterated 'end,' and 'is come') do we catch sight of the misery of the prophet himself as he shudders at the ruin he pronounces. Observe that the nation's sins are here taken for granted; not till in the succeeding section does he contemplate all that justifies this terrible fate. For the grim sternness of detail in the description of disaster, the chapters are almost parallel to Deut. xxviii. 15–68. In chaps. iv and v a progress is to be noticed—siege, famine, destruction; the descriptions gain in clearness as the prophet proceeds. Chap. vi marks the first entrance of a thought very familiar, that the land itself is the subject of holiness or sin; chap. vii gathers up all that has gone before in a succession of surprising lyrical outbursts.

Chaps. iv and v introduce us to the frequent symbolical actions in Ezekiel. Were they literally carried out? Smend (see on iii. 10) and König (*Dict. Bib.* vol. v. pp. 175 f.) argue strongly for

before thee, and pourtray upon it a city, even Jerusalem:
2 and lay siege against it, and build forts against it, and cast

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the negative. The latter, who doubts also the literalness of Hosea i and iii, points out that the actions are rarely stated to be carried out; that some (iv. 5, 12; cf. Jer. xxv. 15 ff.) are, taken literally, incredible; others (e. g. xii. 18) would be hardly noticeable; that the caldron incident in xxiv. 3 is definitely called a parable, and hence, also, the actions in xxi. 17, xxii. 13, and iii. 24 are to be understood as parables. Kuenen and Toy agree. Bertholet and Kraetzschmar hold that all was literally carried out, as also does H. P. Smith (*History of Israel*, pp. 302 ff.); even the '190' days of iv. 5 might be explained by a prolonged illness (see note on verse 4). Davidson holds that 'there is more than mere literary artifice,' though some of the symbols could not have been represented, and 'probably none were actually performed.' We must, however, remember the following points. (1) Orientals love symbolic and dramatic action—how easily that love showed itself may be seen in xxi. 19 and 20; what is almost inconceivable to us might be as possible in ancient Babylonia as it is in modern India. (2) The line drawn between symbol and reality is uncertain; an act might be called a *māshāl* (proverb) while it was being naturally carried out (cf. the 'parable of the fig-tree,' Matt. xxiv. 32). (3) In all the prophets there seems to be something psychically abnormal, and especially so in Ezekiel. (4) The emblems or symbols vary greatly; Isaiah walks barefoot; Jeremiah finds a text in the Rechabite vow, Ezekiel in the catch phrases used by his hearers. Even Smend allows that the actions in chap. xii were performed. When Ezekiel has described what he was told to do, it need not surprise us that he does not add 'and I did it.' (5) The prophetic word is itself considered as a force in the world: cf. verse 7 and xxxvii. 9. On the other hand, why, if the emblems are merely literary, do they preface some messages and not others? Strange as some of them are, we must suppose that they were carried out more or less completely. The possibility of the several emblems will be discussed as we come to them; and though to us some of them, as Jahn strongly urges, might seem almost ludicrous, to the exiles, knowing the possibility of the dangers thus foretold, having suffered much themselves, and seeing the intense earnestness of the prophet, they must have been in the last degree impressive.

iv. 1-3. *The emblems of the siege.*

1. tile. A clay brick, like those of which whole libraries were composed in Babylon. Many building plans have been found on these clay tablets, as well as astrological and other diagrams; one

up a mount against it; set camps also against it, and plant battering rams against it round about. And take thou 3
unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face toward it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.

Moreover lie thou upon thy left side, and lay the 4

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such is carved as lying on the knees of one of the well-known Telloh statues of Gudea (2500 B.C. or earlier) as statues of mediaeval kings and bishops carry models of cathedrals and abbeys.

2. forts: probably trenches or ramparts.

mount, or mound: the like can be seen in Assyrian representations of sieges, in the British Museum and elsewhere. Cf. Lam. iv. 18. It would not be difficult on the brick to mark the position of mounds, battering-rams, &c.

3. The 'pan' or 'flat plate' (R.V. marg.), here representing the besieged fortifications, is a sort of griddle, on which cakes for offerings are cooked (Lev. ii. 5, vi. 14). As Ezekiel represents God in what he says and does (the two are really the same), Bertholet understands Ezekiel's meaning to be that Yahweh is really besieging Jerusalem. To Isaiah also the Assyrian is the rod of Yahweh's anger. But the principle cannot be applied to the next section.

iv. 4–17. *The emblem of the siege and exile.* The prophet is told to lie, first on his right side, and then on his left, a certain number of days, to signify the exile of Israel and Judah from their own land. This passage has suggested to several students that Ezekiel suffered from catalepsy—a theory which seems to explain other apparent instances of abnormality in the prophet. The view was first brought forward by Klostermann (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1877); its most recent advocate is Kraetzschmar. Catalepsy is described as a light hypnosis, in which the sense organs are closed to all impressions from the outside world, while the patient hears what is said to him by the operator and performs any action which may be commanded, exhibiting at times extraordinary strength and endurance—laid out, for example, at full length upon a row of chairs, he will remain in the same position when all these are removed except the two which support his head and his heels. Of hypnosis in general, 'the sole condition is a total surrender of the will, as the popular phrase goes, to the person or thing attended to' (Titchener). Whether catalepsy, as a state of unconsciousness and extreme rigidity, can exist apart from suggestion, as Klostermann

iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: *according to* the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it, thou shalt
5 bear their iniquity. For I have appointed the years of their iniquity to be unto thee a number of days, even three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the

assumed, is now felt to be highly doubtful; it is alleged, however, to follow hallucinations of sight or sound, some violent excitement, or serious physical injuries; it may last either minutes or months, and rarely, if ever, proves fatal.[1] The only characteristics in common between Ezekiel's experiences and those of a cataleptic are trances and the single instance of a prolonged physical rigidity. But trances are by no means confined to cataleptics; and the rigidity, if we interpret it literally, need not have been anything so definite as actual catalepsy. Nothing is gained by the supposition; we should be left wondering why the other trances were not followed by rigidity also; and we should have to credit Ezekiel with much greater freedom in interpreting his own disease than has ever been attributed to Hosea's account of his relations with his wife. The dumbness, we saw, was probably physical only in part; Ezekiel's abnormality consisted rather in a strongly developed faculty of abstraction and second sight which, as far as we can tell, left his other powers of body and mind untouched. Such abnormality is no more a sign of anything approaching mental deficiency than was Socrates's 'demon.'

4. lay . . . upon it: in the second half of the verse it is Ezekiel himself who bears the iniquity of Israel; and it would naturally be expected that Yahweh and not Ezekiel should 'lay the iniquity' where it is to rest, as he 'lays bands' on Ezekiel in verse 8. Hence Wellhausen and others read, 'I have laid the iniquity upon thee.' Sin is here, as constantly in the O. T., regarded as a load which is carried till it is atoned for. In Num. xiv. 34 Israel is to bear the iniquity of its murmurings for forty years in the desert. Bearing iniquity is thus often equivalent to undergoing punishment; but the phrase sets the emphasis on the sin and not the punishment. In these verses Ezekiel's bearing the iniquity is symbolical and not vicarious.

5. Although 150 years had passed since the fall of Samaria, the Northern Kingdom is still part of the true Israel; nor does Ezekiel seem to think of it as schismatic; and it will, as such, be restored (cf. xxxvii. 15 ff. and xlviii. 1 ff.). The left side naturally stands for the north, the right for the south. To what does the '390'

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[1] See also Myers, *Human Personality*, vol. i. pp. 163, 335.

iniquity of the house of Israel. And again, when thou 6
hast accomplished these, thou shalt lie on thy right side,
and shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah: forty
days, each day for a year, have I appointed it unto thee.
And thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, 7
with thine arm uncovered; and thou shalt prophesy
against it. And, behold, I lay bands upon thee, and thou 8
shalt not turn thee from one side to another, till thou

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refer? The days evidently stand for years; the length of Judah's exile (verse 6) is to be forty years; hence Israel's could only last 190 years in all. This is one of the readings of the LXX, the other being 150 (190 − 40). How, then, can the 390 of the MT. be explained? We may suppose that 190 was altered to 390 to include the 200 years of the separate existence of the Northern Kingdom, or to bring the length of time up to the years of the Egyptian bondage, viz. 430 (390 + 40) (Exod. xii. 40; Num. xiv. 34).

6. forty. See Introd. p. 14. The actual interval from Jehoiakim's captivity to the restoration under Cyrus was sixty years. Forty is constantly used as a round number expressive of a generation; Israel's sojourn in the desert lasted forty years; also, according to the latest narratives, the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon. The number is specially frequent in the book of Judges; and see xxix. 11, 13.

7. siege of Jerusalem: cf. verse 3. The literal and the symbolical are hardly dissociated here; what holds of the one holds of the other. The prophet does not rigidly distinguish siege and exile, though Cornill and Jahn regard verses 4–17 as containing two originally separate symbolisms, and rearrange the verses accordingly.

8. thou shalt not turn thee. Would not this be a physical impossibility, even for the shorter space of six months, save in a case of catalepsy (see on verse 4)? The exception itself (*via sup.*) is difficult. Probably, as the 'dumbness' allowed of a great deal of speaking, the lying first on one side and then on the other would be continued for certain, perhaps daily, intervals, through the specified period, the 'bands' here (cf. iii. 25) being spiritual and not pathological. On this interpretation, the 'sign' would be far more impressive to the community than if Ezekiel, on recovering from a trance, and learning that it had lasted 230 days, forthwith interpreted it as referring to the duration of the exile.

thy siege, the action by which the prophet symbolizes, and so, in a sense, undergoes the siege.

9 hast accomplished the days of thy siege. Take thou also unto thee wheat, and barley, and beans, and lentils, and millet, and spelt, and put them in one vessel, and make thee bread thereof; *according to* the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side, even three hundred and
10 ninety days, shalt thou eat thereof. And thy meat which thou shalt eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels a day:
11 from time to time shalt thou eat it. And thou shalt drink water by measure, the sixth part of an hin: from time to

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9. Such a mixture was presumably unlawful, like wearing clothing made of two materials, ploughing with an ox and an ass together, or sowing a field with two kinds of corn (Deut. xxii. 9; Lev. xix. 17). The prohibition seems to be directed merely against unnatural combinations. In any case, the straits to which a besieged city is put are here indicated.

10. The order of the verses is difficult; 10 and 11 come awkwardly after 9, and 16 after 15; on the other hand, 10 and 11 might easily have been inserted before 12, so as to get the commands as to food together. Cornill would place together verses 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, and 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12 ff. (omitting 7 as a gloss); the first of these two sections would thus refer to the siege, the second to the exile. How, then, would the alteration have come about? It is easier to suppose that Ezekiel himself, with both siege and exile in mind, is responsible for the apparent clumsiness. Kraetzschmar more boldly attributes the present awkwardness to a combination of two recensions, one dealing with the exile, the other with the siege.

meat, as always in our translation, means 'food.'

shekels. The Hebrew weights were identical, or almost identical, with the Babylonian. The exiles would probably be using the Babylonian standard. The heavy shekel weighed 252 grains, the light 126 (about the weight of an English sovereign: see note on xlv. 12). Hence Ezekiel's food for the whole day amounted to about eight ounces; the food of a low-paid labouring man in England is found to average about two pounds a day. (See Rowntree's *Poverty*, p. 394.) Cf. Lev. xxvi. 26. That Jerusalem was reduced to such extremes is not stated in Kings, but implied by several passages in Lamentations.

11. hin: a hin roughly equals twelve pints. The fact that Ezekiel eats and drinks during his 'siege' seems conclusive against the theory of catalepsy.

time shalt thou drink. And thou shalt eat it as barley 12
cakes, and thou shalt bake it in their sight with dung that
cometh out of man. And the LORD said, Even thus 13
shall the children of Israel eat their bread unclean,
among the nations whither I will drive them. Then said 14
I, Ah Lord GOD! behold, my soul hath not been polluted:
for from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of
that which dieth of itself, or is torn of beasts; neither
came there abominable flesh into my mouth. Then he 15
said unto me, See, I have given thee cow's dung for man's
dung, and thou shalt prepare thy bread thereon. More- 16

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12. cakes were generally baked in hot ashes or on hot stones.

in their sight. We are not told when the interpretation was to be given; but, at all events, the curiosity of the exiles was to be aroused from the beginning. The revolting condition here commanded is explained as referring, not to the siege, but to the exile (see verse 13). The transition from the one calamity to the other is abrupt; but such abruptness is not impossible to the excited state in which the prophet must have received these revelations. He is not writing in a serene atmosphere like that of chaps. xl–xlviii.

13. Food eaten abroad was unclean, like the foreign land itself, because unsanctified by the neighbourhood of the Deity. The same idea is strong in modern Hinduism; but it was never widely felt by the Jews, outside priestly circles, to attach to all foreign travel or residence, nor does the thought appear in Isaiah xl–lxvi.

14. Kleinert remarks that Ezekiel was so much of a priest that even in a dream he cannot eat impure food; we can hardly conclude, however, with Kleinert, that the priestly contrast between pure and impure 'controls his universe of thought.' See, however, xliv. 23. For the prohibition of torn flesh, &c., see Exod. xxii. 30; Deut. xiv. 21; apparently the fear underlay it that blood might be eaten with the meat. Even at present all meat eaten by Jews must be killed in a special manner to avoid this. It is worthy of note that in chap. xliv Ezekiel applies restrictions to priests that Deuteronomy applies to all Israel. He is speaking here not as a priest but as a good Israelite. Cf. Acts x. 14. Conversations between Yahweh and the prophet are as rare in Ezekiel as they are frequent in Jeremiah.

15. Whether this is a diminution of the uncleanness, or its removal, cannot be decided. It is still a practice of the Fellahîn in Palestine.

over he said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with carefulness; and they shall drink water
17 by measure, and with astonishment: that they may want bread and water, and be astonied one with another, and pine away in their iniquity.

5 And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp sword, *as* a barber's razor shalt thou take it unto thee, and shalt cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weigh, and divide the hair.
2 A third part shalt thou burn in the fire in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled; and thou shalt take a third part, and smite with the sword round about it; and a third part thou shalt scatter to the
3 wind, and I will draw out a sword after them. And thou

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16. astonishment. The word rendered 'astonish' is now expressed better by the form 'astound.' Cf. xii. 19, and Jer. ii. 12, where 'be astonished' is parallel to 'be ye horribly afraid.'

17. pine away. Cf. xxiv. 23, xxxiii. 10, and Lev. xxvi. 39; in each case the cause is sin itself, rather than any results of sin.

v. 1–4. *The emblem of the extirpation of the nation.* This follows naturally on the previous chapter. Ezekiel has been besieger and besieged; now he becomes, so to speak, the city itself, and its destroyer.

1. Cf. Isa. vii. 20. The metaphor of that passage has changed into the acted symbol of this. To those who watched the act, the cutting off of hair and beard would be familiar as a sign of mourning. Cf. xxiv. 17. The balances will further suggest the inerrancy of the divine judgement: cf. Isa. xxviii. 17. LXX has 'sharper than a barber's razor,' which would need the omission of the second 'thou shalt take unto thee.'

2. fire. The word here generally denotes 'hearth fire,' the warming rather than the destructive element; hence the more bitter irony of this passage, 'when the days of the siege,' &c., i. e. to symbolize the conflagration when, &c. The prophet speaks as if symbol and reality were now completely one.

draw out, i. e. lengthen out. This threefold action shows the extent of the coming calamity very clearly; the city itself a prey to pestilence, famine, and fire; its immediate surroundings a prey shalt take thereof a few in number, and bind them in thy skirts. And of these again shalt thou take, and cast them 4 into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; therefrom shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: This is Jerusalem: I have 5 set her in the midst of the nations, and countries are round about her. And she hath rebelled against my 6

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to the sword and wild beasts; and the land of exile, where fire and sword will still follow the fugitives.

3. bind them in thy skirts: to bind in the folds of the garment is to save from ruin. For the expression, cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 29; for the idea of the remnant to be saved, cf. Isa. vi. 13, x. 22, Jer. xxiii. 3, and Ezek. vi. 8. Elsewhere, not even a remnant is to survive: cf. Isa. xiv. 30; Jer. xi. 23; and Ezek. xi. 13.

4. For the remnant a further calamity is waiting: cf. verse 10.

therefrom. This cannot, according to the Hebrew, or the sense, refer to the fire. Then to what? The only alternative is the remnant; but it is not easy to see how a fire could come forth on *all* Israel, either from that part of the remnant that is destroyed, or the part that is saved. The sense would be far easier if we were to follow Kraetzschmar's suggestion, and read 'from me' (cf. the end of verse 2).

v. 5-17. *Explanation of the four symbols.* Because the nation has opposed Yahweh, Yahweh opposes the nation, and will make her a terrible example to the world; the punishments just symbolized shall be more than fulfilled. Thus will Yahweh make himself recognized; and the whole section ends in a reiterated sentence of hopeless condemnation. The passage falls into two divisions, verses 5-10, 11-17.

5. in the midst of the nations. To the historian, Palestine is literally 'in the midst,' at the meeting-point of East and West. Following Ezekiel, Dante places Jerusalem at the centre of the world, with the Ganges as the extreme East and the pillars of Hercules as the extreme West. To the Greeks Delphi was the 'navel of the earth'. See Judges ix. 37; Ps. xlviii. 2; and Hom. *Odyssey*, i. 50. But the whole context makes it clear that Ezekiel's thought is—Jerusalem is visible to all the nations; hence they will see both her sin and her punishment. The conversion of the nations does not enter the prophet's thought; but if they are not here expected to serve Jehovah, both Israel's calamities and their own are to force them to reverence him.

judgements in doing wickedness more than the nations,
and against my statutes more than the countries that are
round about her: for they have rejected my judgements,
and as for my statutes, they have not walked in them.
7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Because ye are
turbulent more than the nations that are round about you,
and have not walked in my statutes, neither have kept my
judgements, neither have done after the ordinances of the
8 nations that are round about you; therefore thus saith
the Lord GOD: Behold, I, even I, am against thee; and
I will execute judgements in the midst of thee in the
9 sight of the nations. And I will do in thee that which I
have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the
10 like, because of all thine abominations. Therefore the
fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the
sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgements
in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter unto
11 all the winds. Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD,

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6. for they have rejected. As the text stands 'they' ought here to refer to 'Jerusalem,' otherwise we should expect 'and yet they,' implying that the sin of Jerusalem is still greater. The thought is that of Amos iii. 2.

7. more than the nations. Cf. especially xvi. 46 ff.

ordinances of the nations. Israel has fallen below pagan morality. One of the few references in the O. T. to 'the law written in the heart': cf. Rom. ii. 15. We cannot gather from the rest of the book what was Ezekiel's conception of these ordinances; but he certainly saw in Babylon a city and society of 'modern' morality (see Introd. p. 16), and he nowhere inveighs against the ordinances of Babylon as of the other nations. Had he felt the difference between the orderliness of Babylon and the turbulence of Jerusalem? In xi. 12 the negative is omitted (in spite of xvi. 48), and Ewald, Smend, and Toy would omit it here ('Thou hast imitated the heathen').

9. That Jerusalem should be destroyed was still almost unthinkable to the Jews.

10. See Jer. xix. 9; Deut. xxviii. 53; and 2 Kings vi. 28.

the whole remnant. This goes beyond verse 3.

surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish *thee*; neither shall mine eye spare, and I also will have no pity. A third part of thee shall die 12
with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee; and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and a third part I will scatter unto all the winds, and will draw out a sword after them. Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will 13
satisfy my fury upon them, and I will be comforted: and they shall know that I the LORD have spoken in my zeal,

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11. It is noteworthy that Judah's sin culminates for Ezekiel in the defilement of the sanctuary.

abominations. An almost technical term for the idols which were the rivals, or (to the unthinking) the representations of Yahweh.

diminish: of the two meanings of the Hebrew word which is used here, the one, to 'scratch' or 'scrape,' seems impossible; and it is difficult to find an object for the other, 'to withhold,' in the word 'eye,' which does not occur till the next sentence. A stronger expression is needed; and a slight change gives 'hew down,' as in R. V. margin.

will have no pity. Cf. viii. 18, xxi. 21, xxxvi. 22.

12. Explains verse 2. Cf. vi. 11. A fourth plague, of wild beasts, is often added: cf. verse 17, xvii. 14, xxxiii. 27; Jer. xxi. 7. Note the sudden change from the second person to the third, in the clause which is verbally repeated from verse 2.

13. satisfy my fury: i. e. as R.V. marg., 'bring it to rest'; Yahweh's anger will be exhausted when the full punishment has been inflicted. This is the side of Ezekiel's theology which is least evangelical.

comforted: as the heat of anger subsides.

that I the LORD have spoken: a variant of the words constantly on Ezekiel's lips, 'they shall know that I am Yahweh.' To a phrase so common we must not assign too precise a meaning. 'They shall recognize that I am not like the gods of the nations, held even by their worshippers to be capricious and feeble; but that I am as you, my own people, should know me, righteous and supreme.' To a true Israelite the name Yahweh (Israel's God) now connotes all that a Gentile could understand by 'Elohim,' or God.

14 when I have accomplished my fury upon them. More-
over I will make thee a desolation and a reproach, among
the nations that are round about thee, in the sight of al
15 that pass by. So it shall be a reproach and a taunt, an
instruction and an astonishment, unto the nations that are
round about thee, when I shall execute judgements in thee
in anger and in fury, and in furious rebukes: I the LORD
16 have spoken it: when I shall send upon them the evil
arrows of famine, that are for destruction, which I will
send to destroy you; and I will increase the famine upon
17 you, and will break your staff of bread; and I will send
upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave
thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through
thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee: I the LORD
have spoken it.

6 2 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son

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15. The text of the LXX is here considerably shorter.

16. The insistence on famine is noteworthy; it was the most terrible of the evils of siege, as afflicting every one indiscriminately.

17. evil beasts: cf. Exod. xxiii. 29; 2 Kings xvii. 25; Deut. vii. 22. The removal of this plague is foretold in Ezek. xxxiv. 25. The lion is prominent in the O. T., as in Assyrian sculptures.

blood. The phrase 'pestilence and blood' (alliterative in Hebrew) occurs in xxviii. 23, xxxviii. 22; blood would therefore seem to be used for corpses or the contagion of dead bodies.

The change from the plural to the singular, as in Deuteronomy, is easy, when the nation is thought of as a moral personality responsible to Yahweh.

vi. 1–11. *The address to the mountains of Israel.* In the memory of an exile the mountains of Israel, which formed the backbone of Palestine, would stand out in pathetic contrast to the monotonous plain of Mesopotamia; but to the religious reformer the mountains would suggest the local shrines which crowned their heights. Ezekiel was compelled to denounce the very things he could not but love. We may compare the thought expressed in Wordsworth's sonnet on the subjugation of Switzerland, beginning 'Two voices are there; one is of the sea; One of the mountains.' The desolation of the mountain shrines, and the mountain towns, of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy unto them, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear 3 the word of the Lord GOD: Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys: Behold, I, even I, will bring a sword upon you, and I will destroy your high places. And your altars 4 shall become desolate, and your sun-images shall be broken: and I will cast down your slain men before your

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is to be complete. A remnant, however, is to escape, in order to come to a late repentance for their sins. D. H. Müller has pointed out that the general scheme of thought in Ezekiel's mind reappears in chaps. xxxv and xxxvi, where the oracle commences with Yahweh's command to the prophet; next comes the call to the mountains; then a prediction of war and death and destruction of cities; lastly, the recognition of the power of God by the sufferers and (though not here) the nations. This sequence is not confined to a few chapters, but appears in Ezekiel's general thought.

3. watercourses, or, as R. V. marg., 'ravines': the *wadies* which dried up in summer. 'Valleys' is a wider term. The valleys too were scenes of idolatry, especially the valley of Hinnom (which has, in the language of the N. T., become 'Gehenna'): see also Joshua xv. 8 and 1 Sam. xvii. 2, 19.

high places. Heb. *Bamah*, a word of uncertain derivation, precariously connected with the Greek word for altar: cf. xvi. 16, xx. 29, xxxvi. 2, xliii. 7. They existed at places known to have been sacred in pre-Israelite times, which were therefore presumably seats of the old heathen rites; these would naturally influence and degrade the worship of Yahweh, which indeed they must have originally attracted to their own sacred sites. The high places are in 1 Sam. ix. 12 spoken of as innocent; and in 1 and 2 Kings they are mentioned as not being removed except by Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel imply that they still exist. 'High places' have recently been discovered at Taanach, Gezer, and Petra. Their general features were an altar, standing stones and 'asherah' or sacred pole, laver, sacred cave, and depository for refuse.

4. sun-images. Sun-worship had become popular in Judah under Manasseh; but the word used here may probably refer to a North Syrian god whose name appears in Mount Amanus, and who would be easily identified with Baal (see note on viii. 16, and 2 Kings xxiii. 4).

5 idols. And I will lay the carcases of the children of Israel
before their idols; and I will scatter your bones round
6 about your altars. In all your dwelling places the cities
shall be laid waste, and the high places shall be desolate;
that your altars may be laid waste and made desolate, and
your idols may be broken and cease, and your sun-images
may be hewn down, and your works may be abolished
7 And the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and ye shall
8 know that I am the LORD. Yet will I leave a remnant,
in that ye shall have some that escape the sword among
the nations, when ye shall be scattered through the
9 countries. And they that escape of you shall remember
me among the nations whither they shall be carried
captives, how that I have been broken with their whorish
heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes,

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idols: the word here used is almost peculiar to Ezekiel, 'block-idols,' but constantly employed by him; notice the irony of their helplessness.

5. The first half of the verse, repeated almost verbally from the previous clause, is absent in the LXX.

your bones. Cf. Jer. vii. 32. To scatter the bones was to defile the shrines as well as to destroy their worshippers.

6. cities: the word does not imply more than what to us would be a village, and would generally be close to the high places. Flinders Petrie tells of an Arab who pointed out to him three tents lying in a valley beneath them with the words, 'Behold the city of the sons of my tribe.'

works. Your manufactured idols.

9. I have been broken. The Hebrew which these words represent can hardly be translated literally; some error underlies the received text. Most authorities agree with R. V. marg. in reading 'I will break.' The latter phrase is in accordance with the minatory tone of this chapter, and with Ezekiel's general thought; the former (the suffering of God over His people's disobedience) is not found elsewhere in this book.

whorish heart. See Introd., pp. 30, 37, for the connexion between idolatry and sexual impurity: cf. also Matt. xii. 39; Mark viii. 38, where the sin referred to is more general. To Ezekiel, however, idolatry is 'the sum of all villainies.'

which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall loathe themselves in their own sight for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations. And they shall 10
know that I am the LORD: I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: Smite with thine hand, and 11
stamp with thy foot, and say, Alas! because of all the evil abominations of the house of Israel: for they shall fall by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence. He 12
that is far off shall die of the pestilence; and he that is near shall fall by the sword; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the famine: thus will I accomplish my fury upon them. And ye shall know that I am the 13
LORD, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the

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loathe themselves. The analysis of repentance is fuller in Ezekiel than elsewhere in the O.T. See notes on xxxvi. 31. The desolation of exile recalls the sufferers' thought to Yahweh, whom they had forgotten in their own land; and this thought produces, not prayers for restoration, but self-contempt and a fresh insight into his character.

vi. 11–14. *Recapitulation of preceding menaces.* These recapitulatory passages are characteristic of Ezekiel; the reader finds them otiose, and is surprised to meet with them in so eager and passionate a writer. But it must be remembered that these passages were not necessarily delivered at one time; and the repetition has an epic impressiveness of its own, like the reiterated warnings of a Cassandra.

11. Thus saith the Lord GOD: the words mark the beginning of a new address.

Smite . . . and stamp, in xxv. 6, are expressions of exultation over a fallen enemy; what is called in German 'Schadenfreude.' 'Alas' should therefore be altered to 'Aha!' Regarding the conditions around him as a struggle between Yahweh and his revolted subjects, the prophet sides with Yahweh, and rejoices at his ally's well-deserved triumph. The attitude of Hosea and Jeremiah is very different, and even Ezekiel does not preserve this exultation unchanged: see xi. 13. The continued tone of excitement must not be forgotten by the reader.

tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and
under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet
14 savour to all their idols. And I will stretch out my hand
upon them, and make the land desolate and waste, from
the wilderness toward Diblah, throughout all their
habitations: and they shall know that I am the LORD.
7 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

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13. under every green tree. Trees, generally solitary and conspicuous, are still revered as sacred by the Fellahîn in Palestine. For the widespread popularity of tree-worship, see Frazer, *Golden Bough*, *passim*. God's oracular voice was supposed to be heard in the rustling of the leaves: cf. 2 Sam. v. 24.

sweet savour: a phrase which occurs first in Ezekiel, but is characteristic of the later legislation.

The expressions in the centre of the verse recall phrases common in Assyrian cuneiform inscriptions; e. g. 'I threw the bodies of their warriors on the tops of the hills; I made their blood to flow over the valleys and the heights of the mountains.'

14. Diblah: such a wilderness is unknown. Diblathaim in Moab, east of the Dead Sea (Num. xxxiii. 46; Jer. xlviii. 22), can hardly be meant. Michaelis suggests 'from the desert to Riblah,' i. e. from furthest south to north; Riblah on the Orontes ('in the land of Hamath,' Jer. lii. 9) would have a mournful significance for Ezekiel's later readers, as the scene of the blinding of Zedekiah.

vii. *Conclusion of the first cycle of threats.* 'The end is at hand!' The whole chapter is a good example of a style of composition almost peculiar to Ezekiel. The 'dirge' is half lyrical, half homiletic; and the lyrical tone is half of triumph, half of lament. The prophet's mind is full of the sin of his country, and the inevitableness of its ruin; his spirit rises at the vindication of Yahweh's law which Judah had spurned; yet the prolonged dwelling upon the thought of calamity is the characteristic of misery as well as of triumph. Rapid transitions from one mood to the other are to be found in Hosea and Jeremiah; in Ezekiel alone are the two thus blended together.

The chapter falls into three sections, verses 2-9, 10-18, 19-27. Ezekiel begins with a bare announcement of the relentless fulfilment of the threatened punishment; he then pictures the blow falling with paralysing suddenness on all the activities of city life, and the tragic contrast of the ensuing terror and dispersion. This contrast suggests to the prophet the wickedness and idolatry which had governed the old life; the profane land must be further profaned by the presence of the heathen. The lyric ends with

And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD unto 2
the land of Israel, An end: the end is come upon the
four corners of the land. Now is the end upon thee, 3
and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee
according to thy ways; and I will bring upon thee all
thine abominations. And mine eye shall not spare thee, 4
neither will I have pity: but I will bring thy ways upon
thee, and thine abominations shall be in the midst of
thee: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: An evil, an only evil; 5
behold, it cometh. An end is come, the end is come, it 6
awaketh against thee; behold, it cometh. Thy doom is 7

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a prediction of mourning, universal, and deserved. The whole tone of the chapter, with its repeated 'the end,' 'the day,' suggests that the final catastrophe is close at hand; according to the dates (i. 3, viii. 1) it must be at least four years before the fall of the city; but the tone of excitement, as if the prophet all but saw the city in flames, is apparent even immediately after his call; and certainly the chances seemed against Zedekiah being able to hold out as long as he succeeded in doing.

In verses 2-4, 5-9 we again seem to have two recensions of the text (cf. also on x. 9 ff., xxx. 23 ff.); the second section gives nothing fresh except 7^{b}; nearly all the phrases of the first section are merely repeated, and the LXX gives a different (though surely incorrect) order of verses (1, 2, 6^{a}, 7-9, 3, 4, 5^{a}, 10 ff.). On the other hand, unless we are to carry out the drastic suggestions of Jahn (see Introd. pp. 44, 48) right through the book, we must admit that it was characteristic of Ezekiel to incur the charge of repetition by dwelling long on a single thought; here the repetition is a refrain which develops into an antistrophe.

vii. 2-9. *The imminent fulfilment of doom.*

3. send mine anger, as if it were a definite force or agency like the prophet or the prophetic word (cf. Isa. lv. 11).

4. 'Peccatum poena peccati'; the punishment consists in binding the sin to the sinner. Cf. iv. 17.

5. an only evil must mean 'one which needs no second to complete its work.' A possible alteration would give 'evil upon evil.' Note the agitation with which the short clauses are jerked out.

6. the end . . . awaketh: the word in play in the Hebrew (*haḳ-ḳeç, hē-ḳiç*) cannot well be rendered in English.

7. doom: the word occurs in verse 10, and also in Isa. xxviii. 5,

come unto thee, O inhabitant of the land: the time is
come, the day is near; *a day of* tumult, and not *of* joyful
8 shouting, upon the mountains. Now will I shortly pour
out my fury upon thee, and accomplish mine anger against
thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways; and I
9 will bring upon thee all thine abominations. And mine
eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: I will bring
upon thee according to thy ways, and thine abominations
shall be in the midst of thee; and ye shall know that I
10 the LORD do smite. Behold, the day, behold, it cometh:
thy doom is gone forth; the rod hath blossomed, pride
11 hath budded. Violence is risen up into a rod of wicked-
ness; none of them *shall remain*, nor of their multitude,
nor of their wealth: neither shall there be eminency

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where it means 'crown' or 'garland'; Jewish commentators connect with an Aramaic word for the glow of the sunrise; the sense would then be 'the fatal dawn has come' (so A. V.); or, with Kraetzschmar, we may derive it from a root meaning to 'purify,' LXX omits the word altogether.

tumult, and not . . . joyful shouting: cf. Amos v. 18. The mountains will no longer resound with the joyous cries of harvest, or the shouts of the familiar idolatrous worship.

9. The last clause is an elaboration of the last clause of verse 4.

vii. 10–18. *The tragic contrast between confidence and desolation.*

10. the rod hath blossomed, &c. These words can hardly refer to Babylon, as in Jer. l. 31, since Ezekiel nowhere attacks Babylon; they mean 'the fatal day has come; the boastful confidence of Judah, whether under the protection of Babylon or in rebellion against it (see Introd. p. 13), has at last borne its fruit.' There is probably here a reminiscence of Isa. xxviii. 1 (the intoxicated pride of Samaria). The idea of inevitable Nemesis underlies the prophetic understanding of the judgements of both the eighth century and the sixth; see especially chaps. xxviii. 1–19.

11. Violence. The lawlessness of the richer classes in Jerusalem is attacked from Isaiah onwards. Cf. Ezek. xlv. 9; cf. also Skelton's rhymes:

Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down, &c.

eminency: or, as A. V. or R. V. marg., 'wailing.' The

among them. The time is come, the day draweth near: 12
let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath
is upon all the multitude thereof. For the seller shall 13
not return to that which is sold, although they be yet alive:
for the vision is touching the whole multitude thereof,
none shall return; neither shall any strengthen himself in
the iniquity of his life. They have blown the trumpet, 14
and have made all ready; but none goeth to the battle:
for my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof. The 15
sword is without, and the pestilence and the famine
within: he that is in the field shall die with the sword;
and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall
devour him. But they that escape of them shall escape, 16
and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys,

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word does not occur elsewhere; nor does the word translated 'wealth.' We must either guess at the meaning or correct the text. Cornill suggests simply 'what are they and their multitude?' and, with the LXX, omits the last clause entirely. 'Multitude is repeated like a 'pedal base,' in the three following verses.

13. The older interpretation of this verse (Jerome and Ewald) refers the return to that which is sold to the year of Jubilee, when land reverts to its original owner (Lev. xxv. 10). But if the end of all things is at hand, there would be neither year of Jubilee nor reversion of land. Smend refers to the forced sales, and the cheap purchases from those who were being carried away at the first deportation; the buyers would get little from their bargains. Even so, why should the vendors be bidden not to mourn? They were not to return to their estates (verse 13 [b]). Kraetzschmar sets down the whole clause as a gloss, due to a commentator who has not understood the meaning, viz. that in the coming ruin there will be no more opportunity for the triumphs or the regrets of bargaining.

in the iniquity of his life: this sense cannot be got out of the Hebrew. R. V. marg. is nearer; the Hebrew expression is difficult, and it possibly results from a textual corruption. LXX omits it. The general sense is clear.

14. The overweening confidence is succeeded by cowardice and despair.

15. See v. 2, vi. 12.

16. doves of the valleys. LXX omits the comparison. For

17 all of them mourning, every one in his iniquity. All hands shall be feeble, and all knees shall be weak as
18 water. They shall also gird themselves with sackcloth, and horror shall cover them; and shame shall be upon
19 all faces, and baldness upon all their heads. They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be as an unclean thing; their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the LORD; they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it hath been the stumblingblock of their iniquity.
20 As for the beauty of his ornament, he set it in majesty: but they made the images of their abominations *and* their detestable things therein: therefore have I made it unto
21 them as an unclean thing. And I will give it into the hands of the strangers for a prey, and to the wicked of
22 the earth for a spoil; and they shall profane it. My face will I turn also from them, and they shall profane my

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the 'mourning' of doves, cf. Isa. xxxviii. 14, lix. 11; similar expressions are found in Babylonian.

18. baldness: to shave the head entirely is forbidden to Israel, as a heathenish practice, in Deut. xiv. 1, and to the priests in Lev. xxi. 5; Ezek. xliv. 20.

vii. 19-27. *The defiling presence of the heathen in the once fair and prosperous land.*

19. Ezekiel resumes his tone of irony. More than other prophets he has the New Testament suspicion of money; and he omits all reference to gold in describing the ornamentation of his temple. 'The wealth they craved for will be useless to them in their need.'

20. Read as R. V. marg., 'they turned it to pride,' for 'he set it,' &c. 'His' should be 'their.'

21. The heathen themselves will laugh at Judah's golden idols; the wicked will despoil the signs of Judah's wickedness. Cf. Hos. x. 6.

profane. Ezekiel does not suggest, of course, that the idols were holy; but that the gold of which they were made is to be put to a common instead of a religious use; so in verse 22. To profane Yahweh's name (Lev. xviii. 21; Ezek. xxxvi. 20) is to

secret *place*: and robbers shall enter into it, and profane
it. Make the chain: for the land is full of bloody crimes, 23
and the city is full of violence. Wherefore I will bring 24
the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their
houses: I will also make the pride of the strong to cease;
and their holy places shall be profaned. Destruction 25
cometh; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be
none. Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour 26
shall be upon rumour; and they shall seek a vision of
the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest,
and counsel from the ancients. The king shall mourn, 27
and the prince shall be clothed with desolation, and the
hands of the people of the land shall be troubled: I will

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cause Yahweh to be spoken of as if he were one of the gods of the heathen.

22. secret: whether we apply this to Yahweh's *place*, or *treasure*, the temple is meant. Israel profanes it by allowing the heathen to enter and spoil: cf. Luke xxi. 24. Hence, Israel must share the responsibility for the outrages of her foes.

23. chain. This word is not used elsewhere by Ezekiel; and there is nothing in the context to suggest this command to prepare for the chaining of the prisoners. Most commentators, including Davidson, doubt the genuineness of the text. Some stronger expression seems to be needed after verse 22, such as 'clear it out!'

24. LXX reads 'of their strength' instead of 'of the strong.'

26. Cf. for the first part of the verse, Jer. iv. 20; for the second, Jer. xviii. 18; the verse is a good example of the influence exerted over Ezekiel by the older prophet.

the law means instruction to meet the special crisis; the priest is as dumb as the prophet and the statesman. From the days of Eli, and still earlier, the priest was expected to take a leading part in national affairs; he is much more than a mere performer of sacrifices; his decisions are sought not only in religious perplexities (Ezek. xliv. 23; Hag. ii. 11) but also in law-suits (Ezek. xliv. 24). Cf. also 2 Kings xix. 2, xxii. 14.

27. The king. Ezekiel never uses this word for Zedekiah nor for other kings of Judah, except in xxxvii. 22, 24 and xliii. 7, 9; he prefers 'prince'; and this latter word is always used for the civil head of the new state in xl-xlviii. Even if 'king' is right here, 'prince' can hardly follow it, as if some do unto them after their way, and according to their deserts will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

8 And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth *month*,

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other high functionary (unknown elsewhere) were meant. LXX omits the reference to the king altogether. Were 'king' right, we should at least have expected 'princes' to signify the nobility as distinct from the commonalty.

deserts, literally 'judgements,' i.e. practices and habits—parallel to 'way.'

SECTION III. JERUSALEM'S SIN AND FALL (viii–xi).

A year has elapsed since the last date (i. 1), though not necessarily since the delivery of chap. vii. Better relations, however, seem to exist between Ezekiel and his neighbours than are implied in chap. iii; still, the community as a whole, and even the elders themselves, are far from understanding Ezekiel's message or God's will. In this section symbolic action and allegory crystallize into vision. Ezekiel has already foretold the impending ruin of the city, and, in general terms, denounced its sins. Now these things are described—seen in detail—and Yahweh at last dramatically deserts the city, and leaves it to its fate. The order of the visions is natural and impressive—the interest increasing steadily up to the final moment of Yahweh's departure. The incident in chap. xi, however, which culminates in the death of Pelatiah, would more naturally have preceded the second theophany, and even the vision of the destroying angels; we should then have had, first the wickedness in the city, then the descent of the punishment. The answer is that the general effect of arrangement in Ezekiel's prophecies and visions does not necessarily prevent their being set down in the order in which they occurred (see Introd. pp. 8, 9), and that there is a special appropriateness in the passage, as occurring in this particular context (see note to chap. xi). The whole section concludes with the first word of promise uttered by the prophet (xi. 16–20), which strikingly though briefly anticipates chap. xxxvii. It is, however, only a gleam out of a dark sky; it is followed immediately by a further and comprehensive threat, and the vision of Yahweh's departure.

Visions, says Marti, with regard to Zechariah, 'neither imply dreams, nor are they mere fictions of the imagination, but the representations sketched out by the prophet in full consciousness of the truth that had dawned on him.' This hardly holds good of Ezekiel, since, in the case of the 'emblems,' we could hardly explain the vivid detail. Have we, then, descriptions founded on in the fifth *day* of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of

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special knowledge which Ezekiel possessed of what was being done in Jerusalem? In that case, why did he 'dress them up' as visions, unless he wished to deceive his hearers? Even then, his gain would be slight, since his point is that the practices were actually carried on. Still less can he be describing, under the form of a vision, general usages which would be familiar to him and all his hearers. The visions must really be visions; i. e. by some power of second sight, Ezekiel, whether in a trance or not, must have watched these scenes. Whether they were taking place at the very moment is immaterial; but there is nothing that makes any detail of them improbable. Many instances of such second sight, occurring both with and without connexion with the trance-state, and carefully authenticated, may be found in *Phantasms of the Living*, Myers' *Human Personality*, &c.

viii. 1–18. *The first series of visions* (the appearance of Yahweh; the iniquities in the temple; the Image of Jealousy; animal-worship; the weeping for Tammuz; the worship of the sun; the sentence of condemnation) supplies valuable material for our knowledge of the religious reaction after the death of Josiah. Thucydides remarked in connexion with the plague at Athens, that national misfortunes turn men to religion or else to atheism. The effect of misfortune on the southern kingdom was not atheism, but an outburst of violent superstition and fanaticism, as was shown in the treatment of Jeremiah; see also Introd. p. 13. That these idolatrous practices have all a strong Babylonian character is not surprising, since Judah is now a Babylonian vassal-state. The account of 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14 ff. rests largely on this chapter, which forms also a valuable commentary on the reversal of the Deuteronomic reforms.

viii. 1–6. *The appearance of Yahweh and the image of jealousy.*

1. The sixth month: as in i. 1, the word 'month' is omitted in the Hebrew. The date will be Sept. 1, 591; but the LXX reads 'the fifth month,' which would make the interval since the first chapter exactly a year and a month (supplying 'fourth' from i. 1 to i. 3: see note *ad loc.*). This is equivalent to the seven days of iii. 16 added to the 390 days (Hebrew text) of iv. 9. This reckoning, however, assumes that the forty days of iv. 5 are included in the 390, and the LXX of iv. 9 reads not 390 but 190 (or 150). The methods of writing numbers were so various and liable to confusion that the paucity of such uncertainties as this is surprising.

the elders. Cf. xiv. 1, xx. 1. Whatever the real nature of Ezekiel's 'dumbness' (see on iii. 26), he is treated with re-

2 the Lord GOD fell there upon me. Then I beheld, and, lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire; from the appearance of his loins and downward, fire: and from his loins and upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the
3 colour of amber. And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the gate of the inner *court* that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which
4 provoketh to jealousy. And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the appearance that

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spect by the leaders of his community, to whom he seems to be something more than is implied in xxxiii. 32. Smend, who attributes these three chapters to a literary 'working up,' thinks that the visit of the elders may really have thrown Ezekiel into a trance.

the hand of the Lord: cf. i. 3, iii. 14.

2. For the first 'fire' LXX reads 'man'; i. 26, 27 makes this certain; see notes thereon. For 'amber' see note on i. 4.

3. Note that Yahweh's hand is put out, but that the 'spirit' lifts the prophet into mid-air: cf. i. 20, iii. 12. The expressions illustrate the mingled clearness and vagueness of Ezekiel's psychical experiences. Ezekiel is quite brief in describing what would be familiar to a priest.

lock: a rare word, but found also in Num. xv. 38, and connected with the Assyrian word meaning 'twisted.'

image of jealousy, i. e. image which provokes jealousy. Was this an 'asherah,' or sacred pole, such as was set up beside the altar in Canaanite Baal-worship (cf. 2 Kings xxi. 7)? If so, Ezekiel is set down in the temple close to the *old* position of this image, which is presumably one of those hewn down by Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 6, though note the 'pillar' in verse 3); this was no longer here, but, as Ezekiel notices in verse 5, in another place.

The word for image, *semel*, occurs only here and in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 7, 15 (perhaps recalled there from this place), and in Deut. iv. 16, which perhaps Ezekiel has in mind. Gunkel holds the word to be the name of an animal to which worship of Babylonian origin was offered. This may be so, but evidence is wanting, and

I saw in the plain. Then said he unto me, Son of man, 5
lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I
lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold
northward of the gate of the altar this image of jealousy
in the entry. And he said unto me, Son of man, seest 6
thou what they do? even the great abominations that the
house of Israel do commit here, that I should go far off
from my sanctuary? but thou shalt again see yet other
great abominations. And he brought me to the door of 7
the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall.
Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: 8

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the distinctively Babylonian innovations are mentioned later in the chapter.

4. Yahweh's glory has occupied the place where once the image had stood. We must notice that the divine glory is now no longer resting on the chariot (cf. ix. 3), which we find later on waiting for him at the south or right side of the temple (x. 3). In iii. 23 also Yahweh appears apart from the chariot.

5. the gate of the altar. Ezekiel is here writing for those who know the plan of Solomon's temple by heart. Is this gate the same as that in verse 3? We know Ezekiel's own temple far better. The altar-gate would naturally be the gate (leading, presumably, from the east) by which the inner court, where the altar stood, would be approached.

6. what they do. Ezekiel evidently saw worshippers as well as the image. No wonder that in his own temple he banishes the laity from the inner courts.

that I should go. R. V. marg. 'to get them far off.' In view of the end of chap. xi, the former is undoubtedly right; the Hebrew could be rendered either way.

yet other . . . abominations: the refrain which follows each section of the vision.

viii. 7–13. *The animal worship* (*the cult of the mysteries*).

7. Apparently Ezekiel is brought again to the outer court; when he refers to the inner court he specifies his meaning.

8. The hole shows him where to force an opening for his body; the men had naturally come in by the door.

dig. The word is used of a ship labouring through a storm, or of a thief breaking into a house: cf. Job xxiv. 16; Exod. xxii. 1. This 'digging through' implies that the cult was secret; not that the worshippers feared punishment on discovery, but because the

9 and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. And
he said unto me, Go in, and see the wicked abominations
10 that they do here. So I went in and saw; and behold
every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts,
and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon
11 the wall round about. And there stood before them
seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, and in
the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan,
with every man his censer in his hand; and the odour of
12 the cloud of incense went up. Then said he unto me,

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mystery-worship is only for the initiated (cf. Jevons, *Introd. to Study of Religion*, chap. xvi).

10. upon the wall. This, with the reference to all kinds of animals, has led many to refer these mysteries to Egypt (so Smend and Bertholet). Incense and the dark chamber were characteristic of Egyptian ritual. On the other hand, there is no clear trace of Egyptian influence on the religion of Israel. The worship of the divinity under certain animal forms (notably the bull and the snake) was familiar in Israel (cf. 1 Kings xiii. 28; 2 Kings xviii. 4); but this multitude of idols may well have been Babylonian; reliefs on the walls were frequent in Babylon (cf. also Ezek. xxiii. 14), and incense was also a part of Babylonian worship. At this period, however, Judah was peculiarly susceptible to the political influence of both Babylon and Egypt, and the cults of both countries may have joined with that of the Canaanites in suggesting new modes of worship. The bitter irony of 'all the idols of the house of Israel' must not be missed.

11. seventy: a round number like 'twenty-five,' verse 16. Cf. Moses' seventy elders (Num. xi. 16).

elders: probably prominent men rather than heads of families.

Jaazaniah: in xi. 1 a different Jaazaniah is mentioned. The better attested LXX reading is, here and in chap. xi, Jeconiah, which is also the alternative form of Jehoiachin, Zedekiah's predecessor on the throne. Shaphan was the chancellor of Josiah (2 Kings xxii; Jer. xxxix. 14) to whom Hilkiah announced the discovery of the book of the law. Is Ezekiel thinking here of the problem he discusses so fully elsewhere, of the moral differences between fathers and sons? Gemariah, who tried in vain to prevent the burning of Jeremiah's roll, is another son of Shaphan (Jer. xxxvi. 25).

incense: in earlier Hebrew the word means 'firebrand' or 'billet'; in Jeremiah (vi. 20, &c.) a costly spice from Southern

Son of man, hast thou seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in his chambers of imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth. He said also unto me, Thou 13 shalt again see yet other great abominations which they do. Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S 14 house which was toward the north; and behold, there sat the women weeping for Tammuz. Then said he unto 15

Arabia; only in the later Levitical law is it regularly used as Ezekiel uses it in this place. The use of it here is an innovation, as the whole cult appears to be.

12. his chambers of imagery. This implies that each had a separate cell; such cells Ezekiel provides (for quite other purposes) in his temple vision (xli. 5 ff.). Hitherto we have been led to think of one room where all were gathered. Could Ezekiel have seen into all seventy cells? Smend answers by his hypothesis that the 'vision' is simply a literary description; but the details, as elsewhere, make against this supposition. The mysteries may easily have involved some actions performed in common and others separately; nor does the expression suggest that Ezekiel was conscious of examining every cell. Kraetzschmar doubts the integrity of the text, and suggests 'how each offers incense to his idol.'

The LORD seeth us not, &c. Cf. Pss. x. 11, lxiv. 5, &c. The phrase is repeated in ix. 9. The meaning of the worshippers is that Yahweh would not approve of these rites, but that Yahweh has plainly ceased to care for the distracted state and people; they must look elsewhere for help. For quotations of other popular sayings, cf. xi. 3, 15, xii. 21, xviii. 2, 19, &c.

viii. 14-15. *The Adonis-cult.*

14. the door of the gate, i. e. the outer gate of the temple.

Tammuz is the Babylonian Dûzu, from Dumu-zu; the name is not Semitic, and is therefore attributed to the supposed older or Sumerian element in Babylonian life. He is the god of spring vegetation, who dies (goes down to Hades), and revives again with the returning summer (July was the month of the festival). Ishtar, the goddess of fertility, goes down to Hades to seek for him. His worship is familiar to us as that of Adonis, celebrated in later times with special pomp in Syria. The story of Venus and Adonis is simply the Oriental nature-myth in a Western dress; in Egypt it appears under the form of the Osiris cult (see J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough*, i. 278, and *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*).

me, Hast thou seen *this*, O son of man? thou shalt again
16 see yet greater abominations than these. And he brought
me into the inner court of the LORD's house, and behold,
at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch
and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their
backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces
toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the
17 east. Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen *this*, O son
of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that
they commit the abominations which they commit here?
for they have filled the land with violence, and have

Adonis means simply 'lord'; Dumu-zu is said to mean 'son of life.' Note the brevity of the description of this part of the vision, Milton's well-known allusion in *Paradise Lost* neglects the tragic side of the cult. Babylonian hymns to Tammuz have been preserved. Later, in Syria, Adonis, like all Syrian gods, became identified with the sun.

viii. 16–18. *The Sun-worship; the climax of the abominations.*

16. Ezekiel is brought back again into the inner court, from the outer gate; the exact spot is not here mentioned; but, like that at which the men stood, it will be one of the more sacred spots in the temple; hence the heinousness of their defiant offence. Since Ezekiel has gone in at the north gate, he naturally sees the sun-worship in the east last of all.

five and twenty men. Are these the heads of the twenty-four priestly families with the chief priest? The 'about,' and the fact that Ezekiel does not say they were priests, forbids this assumption; probably they were laymen, like the 'seventy elders.' LXX here reads 'twenty,' which happens to be the Babylonian number signifying the sun.

the sun. Sun-worship in Judah is first mentioned in 2 Kings xxiii. 5, 11; presumably it had entered the country in Manasseh's time. There can be no reference here to the later Persian sun-worship.

toward the east. The natural position for a sun-worshipper; the 'orientation' of our churches is possibly due to similar considerations or traditions. The holy place in Ezekiel's temple, as in Solomon's, faces west.

17. violence. For Ezekiel, moral and ritual sins are not distinguishable; denunciation of the latter is also that of its inevitable accompaniment. Cf. xviii. 5–9, xxii. 7–12.

turned again to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put
the branch to their nose. Therefore will I also deal in 18
fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity:
and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet
will I not hear them.

Then he cried in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, 9

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they put the branch to their nose. The phrase cannot be decisively explained. There can be no reference to Persian ritual. The LXX has 'merely beheld them as it were mocking.' This suggests that the Jewish commentators are right in understanding the words to conceal some shocking or obscene rite; other plain-spoken and to us revolting expressions have been removed from the Hebrew text by the scribes. If this is so, we can see why this ritual is regarded as worst of all. The real sting of idolatry lay in its connexion with 'violence' and open immodesty. In the Cyprian worship of Adonis, flowers were held to the nose; but no clear reference to that rite can be detected here. J. H. Moulton holds that the reference is to a rite of pre-Persian Magianism, which survives among the modern Parsees.

18. cry in mine ears: the phrase is repeated in the verse immediately following, though in a different sense. LXX omits the second half of the verse. This is not necessary; though, if chap. ix follows immediately on chap. viii, as seems to be the case, the repetition is decidedly awkward.

ix. *The vision of the Destroying Angels.* The vision of relentless and speedy punishment naturally follows that of open and defiant sin. The punishment, however, is discriminating; the angels are first to set a mark on those whose sorrowing resentment dissociates them from the city's guilt; then the rest are to be slain without pity, and the temple itself polluted by corpses, as the sinners had polluted it with idolatry. Ezekiel for a moment shudders at the thought that the last hope of the nation is being extinguished in this punishment of its capital; he is told that land and city have sinned equally; and the vision concludes with the report of the angelic scribe, who announces with the coolness of a Babylonian army-clerk that the destruction is now complete.

Discrimination in punishment has been already hinted at in iii. 19; but hitherto, and throughout the whole of the first section, the city has been regarded as altogether reprobate. Now Ezekiel seems to make a similar discovery to that of Elijah (1 Kings xix. 18). The relief afforded thereby only starts fresh problems, to

Cause ye them that have charge over the city to draw near, every man with his destroying weapon in his hand.
2 And behold, six men came from the way of the upper gate, which lieth toward the north, every man with his slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man in the midst of them clothed in linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side. And they went in, and stood beside the brasen

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solve which (in chaps. xiv, xviii, xxxiii) Ezekiel takes up the thought of iii. 19 afresh.

1. See note on viii. 18.

them that have charge over the city. The word in Hebrew is primarily abstract, and is so translated in the LXX and the Vulgate—'visitation, punishment.' The justification for the concrete here would be the reference, immediately following, to the six men. They, however, do not appear as 'in charge of the city,' but rather as summoned to destroy it. The word for 'cause to draw near' appears, both in the Hebrew and the LXX, as 'have drawn near'; hence we should read 'the punishments of the city have come!' (cf. xii. 23; Hos. ix. 7; Mic. vii. 4), the second half of the verse anticipating verse 2.

2. six men. Hitherto angels have appeared singly (except in Gen. xviii). But these are not angels such as appeared to Gideon or Elijah; they are ministers of the coming judgement. The translation of verse 1 in A.V. and R.V. suggests that they were the guardian angels of the city; but this use is still later, and is nowhere suggested in Ezekiel. Still less can we see here a parallel to Tobit xii. 15, or Rev. iv. 5, viii. 2, though these may have been influenced by our author here. We can hardly help feeling that Ezekiel has not forgotten the high officials of Nebuchadnezzar who would superintend the deportation of 596 B.C.

upper gate, apparently the same as that mentioned in viii. 3, near where stood the 'image of jealousy.' Presumably, these 'men' had been brought with him by Yahweh, and left in the outer court till they were needed.

slaughter weapon: the R.V. margin reads 'battle-axe.' So LXX. Probably, as in Jer. li. 20, 'hammer.'

linen. The material of the priests' clothing (xliv. 17: cf. 1 Sam. ii. 18, xxii. 18, where the priests in early Israel wear a linen ephod). The functions of scribe and priest were always closely allied.

brasen altar. The altar set up in the temple by Solomon, the work of Hiram (2 Chron. iv. 1; 1 Kings viii. 64). Ahaz

altar. And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up 3
from the cherub, whereupon it was, to the threshold of
the house: and he called to the man clothed in linen,
which had the writer's inkhorn by his side. And the 4
LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city,
through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the
foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the
abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to 5
the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye through the city
after him, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have
ye pity: slay utterly the old man, the young man and the 6
maiden, and little children and women: but come not
near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my

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had set up another altar of Assyrian type, but this was of stone; the brazen altar was set by Ahaz on the north side of his own (2 Kings xvi. 14). See note on xliii. 13.

3. gone up from the cherub, &c. A similar phrase occurs in x. 4. The two verses, however, do not clash; here, the reference is to the cherubs in the holy place of the temple. It was this 'Shekinah' of which Ezekiel had been made aware in viii. 4. For the cherubs in Solomon's temple see note on i. 11.

4. a mark. The Hebrew is 'Tav'; the name of the letter T, which in the older script was shaped like a cross (in Palestine—the Moabite stone, and the Siloam inscription—simply ×, which is actually in use as a modern Arab tribal mark). A different word is used for the 'sign' placed upon Cain. Such a sign or mark may have been originally suggested by the badges of tribe or cult (cf. W. R. Smith, *Kinship*, p. 215); it has been conjectured that the early Hebrew prophets bore such marks. A similar sign or mark is the blood sprinkled on the door-posts (Exod. xii. 23). Cf. Rev. vii. 3, xiv. 1, xiii. 16. It is only a coincidence that the Egyptian cross is the sign for life.

6. The command to begin at the sanctuary is as terrible as the general command to destroy; but the sanctuary had long since been polluted by sin; if destruction is to begin with the worst sinners (viii. 11, 16), it can begin nowhere else; contrast Luke xxiv. 47.

come not near, &c. Ezekiel will have no slaying of the guiltless. Contrast Gen. xviii. 23, where a whole city would be saved, were there ten guiltless men within its walls.

sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which
7 were before the house. And he said unto them, Defile
the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth.
8 And they went forth, and smote in the city. And it
came to pass, while they were smiting, and I was left, that
I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord God!
wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring
9 out of thy fury upon Jerusalem? Then said he unto me,
The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding
great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of
wresting *of judgement:* for they say, The Lord hath for-
10 saken the earth, and the Lord seeth not. And as for me
also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity,
11 but I will bring their way upon their head. And behold,
the man clothed in linen, which had the inkhorn by his
side, reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou
hast commanded me.

10 Then I looked, and behold, in the firmament that was

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7. The command to begin at the sanctuary is made still more striking by the second command, to defile it. Note the terrible and dramatic curtness of the order.

8. and I was left. The form of this word in the Hebrew is curious, and it is omitted in the LXX; but it is highly significant; 'as I was left alone with the dead in Yahweh's presence.' The same root, by a play on words, is used in the word translated 'residue.' This 'residue' is the population left in the country after 597 B.C., already sadly worn down: cf. xi. 13. Ezekiel rarely gives direct expression to any feeling over the calamities of his country save righteous exultation; but here and in xxiv. 15 ff., where he is actually beholding the ruin, a cry of horror escapes him. The cry is quickly stifled, as Yahweh reminds him of Judah's guilt.

9. for they say, &c. See viii. 12.

10. Cf. v. 11, vii. 9, viii. 18, ix. 5. A similar refrain occurs in the early chapters of Isaiah; 'for all this his anger is not turned away,' &c. (Isa. v. 25, &c.). Cf. also Amos i. 3, 6, &c.

x. *The second Theophany.* If anything further were here to be added to ch. ix, we should have expected an account of the over the head of the cherubim, there appeared above them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of

destruction of the city. Ezekiel avoids the necessity of giving this by describing symbolically the spiritual side of the destruction for which the previous chapter has prepared us; at the same time our attention is carried from the sickening details of slaughter to the majesty of Yahweh. The effect of the whole is extraordinarily powerful; the wrathful presence of Yahweh; the temple, empty save for the heaps of the dead and the trembling Ezekiel; the heavenly scribe, approaching the chariot as it stands in the background, and taking from its midst burning coals to fling over the doomed city; and as the city blazes, the awe-inspiring sound of the wings of the cherubim.

At this moment Ezekiel seems to be overcome by the vision; and he sees before him all the details of the chariot as he had seen them in his first trance, describing them, as if he had not described them before, with minute but frequent variations. All the same, he is conscious that he is seeing what he has seen before; three times he asserts this; he then sees Yahweh's glory depart from the temple and rest upon the chariot; and the vision ends.

It ought not to surprise us that the chapter contains frequent breaks of thought, and that in many verses it does not hang well together. What would be otherwise difficult to explain without plentiful recourse to hypothetical—and bungling—scribes and redactors, becomes natural if we regard Ezekiel as describing the rapid transitions of a trance; rapid as are these transitions, they only answer to the rapidity of thought when freed from communion with its normal environment.

x. 1–9. *The vision of the burning of the city.*

1. firmament: i.e. the platform of the divine chariot. Hitherto Yahweh has been in the temple (ix. 3, 4); nor is anything said here of Yahweh's glory resting as yet on the chariot; sapphire and throne have been described in i. 26. We must suppose that Ezekiel now sees the chariot outside the walls of the temple, where the 'men' had previously been waiting (ix. 1, 2).

cherubim: the name given in this chapter to the living creatures of chap. i. See also note on verse 20. What is meant by the cherubim? They are met with in the O. T. in five connexions: guarding Paradise[1] (Gen. iii. 3, 4); referred to in the language of prayer and adoration as close to Yahweh's side (2 Sam. ii. 11; 2 Kings xix. 25; Ps. lxxx. 1, xcix. 1; Isa. xxxvii. 16, &c.), and as ornaments in the most sacred parts of the tabernacle and temple

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[1] In the parallel to the Genesis stories in the Masai legends man is driven from Paradise by 'Kilegen,' the morning star.

2 the likeness of a throne. And he spake unto the man clothed in linen, and said, Go in between the whirling *wheels*, even under the cherub, and fill both thine hands with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter
3 them over the city. And he went in in my sight. Now the cherubim stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

(Exod. xxv. 19; Num. vii. 89; 1 Kings vi. 23, &c.); in Ezekiel's vision; the cherub is also mentioned in Ezekiel's song over the Prince of Tyre (xxviii. 14). Taken together, these uses point to an undefined belief in heavenly beings, conceived as non-human, of a peculiarly sacred character. What was the origin of the conception? Doubtless, Semitic; we think at once of the composite animals of Nineveh and Babylon; but the derivation of both word and idea is doubtful. The word has been traced to an Assyrian word *ki-ru-bu*, supposed to refer to the man-bulls that guarded Assyrian palaces, but not known certainly to exist. The connexion of cherubs with lions and oxen in 1 Kings vii. 29 shows at once the affinities and the vagueness of the Israelite idea in historical times. Later, in Enoch, cherubs are connected with the divine worship in Heaven, with Paradise, and the divine fire: cf. the 'living creatures' and their animal forms in Rev. iv. 6, 8 (even to-day the messengers of God are commonly represented with wings). In xxviii. 14 the cherub appears, as nowhere else, to be connected with some definite piece of mythology (see notes thereon).

2. he spake: i. e. Yahweh, still in the temple, sends the 'scribe' to the chariot. Ezekiel sees the whole scene as clearly as Dante sees the ledges on the mount of Purgatory.

coals of fire. Another reminiscence of Isaiah; but how different the purpose for which the coals are used! There they sanctified the prophet; here they suggest that Jerusalem is to be treated like another Sodom (cf. xvi. 46). Ezekiel omits the naïve mention of the 'tongs'; we have no ground, however, for thinking that the contrast between love and wrath, as symbolized respectively by seraph and cherub, could have been present to his mind.

3. the right side: the south. Between the 'house' and the altar were the dead, and to the north the 'abomination.'

the cloud: another reminiscence of Isa. vi. 1. These reminiscences are exactly what we should expect in what is partly a dream state, where the memory is active, though not under normal control.

And the glory of the LORD mounted up from the cherub, 4
and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house
was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the
brightness of the LORD's glory. And the sound of the 5
wings of the cherubim was heard even to the outer court,
as the voice of God Almighty when he speaketh. And 6
it came to pass, when he commanded the man clothed in
linen, saying, Take fire from between the whirling *wheels*,
from between the cherubim, that he went in, and stood
beside a wheel. And the cherub stretched forth his hand 7
from between the cherubim unto the fire that was between
the cherubim, and took *thereof*, and put it into the hands
of him that was clothed in linen, who took it and went out.
And there appeared in the cherubim the form of a man's 8

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4. the cherub: cf. ix. iii. The 'cherub' there is that above the altar, and distinct from the 'cherub' and 'cherubim' of x. 2 and 4, which belong to the chariot.

5. the sound of the wings: cf. i. 24. Yahweh's voice is constantly likened to thunder: cf. Ps. xix. 3-9. The chariot itself moved as Yahweh prepared to approach it.

God Almighty: Hebrew, as R.V. margin, 'El Shaddai' (cf. i. 24). The phrase occurs elsewhere only in Gen. xliii. 14, in the priestly narrative, in Job, in four other poetical passages, and once in Ruth; the origin of the name is unknown.

6. Ezekiel now sees the result of the command given in verse 2; there is no need to suggest textual corruption. 'The whirling (wheels)' is a different word from that used for a single wheel; Ezekiel places the term in the mouth of Yahweh, but does not use it himself: cf. v. 13.

7. the cherub: cf. verses 2, 4. No special cherub seems to be intended. The definite article would suggest the creature nearest to Ezekiel; but the singular and the plural are used as practically interchangeable in this passage; one would always be more prominent to the onlooker than the rest.

stretched forth his hand. This element in the vision is doubtless suggested by Isa. vi. 6; no command is mentioned as being given either to the seraph or to the cherub.

went out, from the temple precincts, to scatter the fire over the city.

8. a man's hand: this had been already noticed in the first vision, i. 8.

9 hand under their wings. And I looked, and behold, fou
wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside one cherub
and another wheel beside another cherub: and th
appearance of the wheels was as the colour of a beryl stone
10 And as for their appearance, they four had one likeness
11 as if a wheel had been within a wheel. When they went
they went upon their four sides: they turned not as the
went, but to the place whither the head looked the
12 followed it; they turned not as they went. And thei
whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and thei
wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, *eve*
13 the wheels that they four had. As for the wheels, the
14 were called in my hearing, the whirling *wheels*. And
every one had four faces: the first face was the face o
the cherub, and the second face was the face of a man,

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x. 9-17. *Second description of the chariot.* The order of the description here differs from that of chap. i (wheels, faces of cherubs, and motion, as against faces, wheels, and motion in chap. i; the throne, in chap. i, is mentioned last). If this is not mere chance, Ezekiel must now be recognizing the various parts of the vision from a different position to that which he occupied relative to the chariot in chap. i (D. H. Müller). Cornill and others regard the whole section as a scribal repetition of chap. i; but if so, the scribe would hardly have made these alterations in the order. Ezekiel is relating his experiences exactly as he received them, though the text is in certain places not free from corruption.

9, 10. Cf. i. 15, 16.

11. A combination of i. 9 and 17.

12. their whole body: Hebrew 'their whole flesh,' which LXX omits. In i. 18 only the felloes of the wheels have eyes. Bertholet suggests that the description is influenced by that of the wheels of the 'laver,' 1 Kings vii. 33. In the last clause, as it stands, the text can only mean 'all four had their wheels'; a slight correction would give 'according to their four wheels.'

13. in my hearing. Cf. note on verse 6.

14. the face of the cherub. In i. 5, 6, 10 we learn that the living creatures had a human appearance, but that they each had four faces, of a man (front), a lion (right), an ox (left), and an eagle

and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of
an eagle. And the cherubim mounted up: this is the 15
living creature that I saw by the river Chebar. And when 16
the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them: and
when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from
the earth, the wheels also turned not from beside them.
When they stood, these stood; and when they mounted 17
up, these mounted up with them: for the spirit of the
living creature was in them. And the glory of the LORD 18
went forth from over the threshold of the house, and stood

(behind). Here Ezekiel sees first the face on the left, but calls it the face, not of an ox, but of 'the' cherub. Unless the text is wrong, the mention of the cherub must imply, as Davidson and Müller hold, that the prophet here identifies with the chariot as a whole ('the cherub' collectively) the animal whose face he noticed most clearly as the chariot moved. The chariot stands at the south side of the temple (to the south of Ezekiel), and moves eastward (verse 19). Hence, if the face of the man is that which looks in front, the face of the leading cherub which Ezekiel sees most clearly will be that on the left of the human face, i. e. the ox-face; taking the rest in order, he will naturally mention the faces of the man, lion and eagle (see Plan G). This explanation is only redeemed from artificiality by recognizing the naïve accuracy of Ezekiel's account. Ezekiel does not need again to describe the throne.

15. This verse anticipates verses 19 and 20; but the verse is not therefore to be struck out here. Whether the chariot actually paused between its second movement here (see verse 5) and the final departure of Yahweh's glory thereon (verse 9) or not, the pause in the description is highly effective. The city is not left till the end of the next chapter; the shrine had been left in ix. 3.

16, 17. Ezekiel now returns to his description of the wheels interrupted in verse 14: cf. i. 19, 20. He specially emphasizes the fact that the quadrilateral arrangement of wheels obviated any necessity of turning. The significance of this can only be that Yahweh's purposes cannot change, but must go straight forward.

x. 18-22. *Yahweh's final departure from the temple.*

18. After the chariot had again risen Yahweh's glory leaves the threshold of the temple, approaches the chariot, and rests above it. Each movement in this desertion of Yahweh's 'secret

19 over the cherubim. And the cherubim lifted up thei
wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight whe
they went forth, and the wheels beside them: and the
stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD's house
and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.
20 This is the living creature that I saw under the God o
Israel by the river Chebar; and I knew that they were
21 cherubim. Every one had four faces apiece, and ever
one four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man
22 was under their wings. And as for the likeness of their

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place' or 'treasury' (vii. 22) is photographed on the prophet's memory.

19. Yahweh leaves the temple by the east gate, and he returns by the same gate in xliii. 4.

20. This verse can only be explained if Ezekiel is understood to be transcribing his own experiences exactly. The thought 'This is what I saw previously by the Chebar' has already entered his mind (verse 15 b, if the clause is correct). It recurs here, and he naturally uses the word for the animals which he had previously used, instead of 'cherub,' the word characteristic of this chapter. This recognition of the identity between the two visions he further presses by the last clause of the verse. But why did this second vision suggest to him at first 'cherubim' and not simply 'living creatures'? The question cannot be answered with certainty; we can hardly suppose (with Müller) that in the interval after the vision of chap. i Ezekiel had seen the necessity of guarding against the verbal connexion of Yahweh with animals, since the animal faces, all but the ox, are mentioned in verse 14. König has suggested that the prophet had lately been impressed by the monsters of Babylonian sculpture; but when he saw the first vision Ezekiel had been in Babylon four years. May not the real explanation be that the thought of the cherub in ix. 3, and of the general connexion between cherubs, Yahweh, and the ark (cf. note on i. 11), suggest to the prophet that the winged supporters of the chariot would naturally be cherubim (so also in verse 20 b); hence only after an interval does he recognize explicitly that these winged beings are the living creatures of his former vision. This he still further emphasizes in verse 22: 'they did not only appear the same; they were the same.'

21. For 'four' wings, the LXX curiously reads 'eight' here, though not in i. 6: see note on that passage.

faces, they were the faces which I saw by the river Chebar, their appearances and themselves; they went every one straight forward.

Moreover the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto 11
the east gate of the LORD's house, which looketh east-

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xi. *The last pause, and the desertion of the city.* Yahweh has now left the temple, and his glory is resting on the chariot. But a further vision is now accorded to Ezekiel, as if to convince him that the last step—the utter desertion of Jerusalem—is inevitable. After a long address on what the prophet has seen, Yahweh lingers no more, and, as the vision closes, the prophet sees him on the Mount of Olives, with the valley of Kidron separating him from the city-walls.

The chapter falls into two sections: Yahweh's grim comments on the confidence of the Judaean statesmen, dramatically followed by the sudden death of one of their number; and a further message, introduced by another Judaean saying, which for the first time foretells restoration and renewal of spirit, coming like a single gleam of sunshine at the close of a day of storm; immediately afterwards, the chariot has gone.

Is this chapter in its right place? Smend and Kraetzschmar find in it an anti-climax after chaps. ix and x; Kraetzschmar holds that the confidence of the princes can only refer to the months immediately preceding the city's last struggle, and Smend thinks that verse 10, with its reference to Riblah, can only have been written down after the fall of the city. These arguments, however, are not conclusive. The fatal refusal to recognize the real dangers of the situation was characteristic of Judah throughout Zedekiah's reign; the reference to it here has all the tragic elements of Nemesis; and, apart from the possibility of a psychical knowledge of the future, the language of verse 10 is not definite enough to necessitate Smend's contention. See note on verse 1.

xi. 1–13. *The flesh and the caldron.* Ezekiel, after having watched Yahweh's glory mounting the chariot, suddenly finds himself at the east gate of the temple, watching a council of Judaean statesmen; he hears their hope of security, in which trust in Yahweh has no part, and he is commanded to announce to them the entire reversal of their expectation. When he ceases speaking he is terrified to see one of their number fall to the ground dead.

1. Brought me unto the east gate. We must suppose that Ezekiel had been outside the temple by the chariot; the last actual reference to his position was in viii. 16 (in the 'inner court of the Lord's house').

ward: and behold, at the door of the gate five and
twenty men; and I saw in the midst of them Jaazaniah
the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah
2 princes of the people. And he said unto me, Son o
man, these are the men that devise iniquity, and that
3 give wicked counsel in this city: which say, *The time* is
not near to build houses: this *city* is the caldron, and we
4 be the flesh. Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy

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five and twenty men. Cf. viii. 16. A different Jaazaniah is here mentioned (LXX, as in chap. viii, reads 'Jeconiah'). How could they be here after the destruction of the inhabitants of the city in chap. ix? The different visions of the trance, vivid as they are, are not continuous, and the symbolical destruction of the population does not prevent Ezekiel from being aware that the city is still standing.

Azzur. Hananiah, Jeremiah's opponent, is also called the son of Azzur (Jer. xxviii. 1).

2. devise iniquity. In Zedekiah's reign the most active politicians were on the side of independence and even revolt from Babylon. This, both to Jeremiah (Jer. xxviii. 16, &c.) and Ezekiel, was flat disobedience to Yahweh; it was also treachery to Nebuchadnezzar (see also 2 Chron. xxxvi. 13, which echoes the prophetic view). It was at the same time the result of infatuated pride. In the third place, as is clear from Jeremiah and the allusions in Ezekiel (vii. 23, ix. 9, xi. 6, xxii. 6), the anti-Babylonian party was the party of high-handed violence and oppression. Hence a council of its representatives may well be the subject of the culminating picture of the wickedness in the doomed city.

3. Ezekiel may have known of these expressions from a letter of Jeremiah (see Jer. xxix. 1), or some other friend left behind in Jerusalem. But to what does the first clause refer? Who wished to build houses? Evidently the princes hold themselves to be safe from Nebuchadnezzar; the caldron is the city, which preserves from the fire the flesh placed within it. Nebuchadnezzar will attack them in vain. Ewald and Cornill follow LXX in reading 'Is not the time near since houses were built?' i. e. is not the country just settling down to be really at peace, after the troubles of the invasion of 596 B. C.? But if so, they would not have immediately thought of their fortifications; they mean, 'We cannot carry on our ordinary business; we must keep within the safety of our walls.'

4. The prophet, who has hitherto been a passive spectator,

O son of man. And the spirit of the LORD fell upon 5
me, and he said unto me, Speak, Thus saith the LORD:
Thus have ye said, O house of Israel; for I know the
things that come into your mind. Ye have multiplied 6
your slain in this city, and ye have filled the streets
thereof with the slain. Therefore thus saith the Lord 7
GOD: Your slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it,
they are the flesh, and this *city* is the caldron: but ye
shall be brought forth out of the midst of it. Ye have 8
feared the sword; and I will bring the sword upon you,
saith the Lord GOD. And I will bring you forth out of 9
the midst thereof, and deliver you into the hands of
strangers, and will execute judgements among you. Ye 10
shall fall by the sword; I will judge you in the border of
Israel; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. This 11
city shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the
flesh in the midst thereof; I will judge you in the border
of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the LORD: for ye 12
have not walked in my statutes, neither have ye executed
my judgements, but have done after the ordinances of

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is called on to prophesy and to express the divine will; so, in xxxvii. 9, he has himself to call to the wind to bring life to the dry bones.

7. With startling suddenness, Ezekiel gives the opposite turn to their words; compare the equally unexpected turn to this expression in xxiv. 3-12 and to the familiar comparison of Israel to the vine in xv. 1-5.

8. Ye have feared the sword. Their self-confidence has really no element of bravery in it; it is merely founded on their trust in material defences, which will prove useless.

10. Nebuchadnezzar actually received his prisoners at Riblah, which was just on the frontiers of the old northern kingdom (2 Kings xxv. 18-21; Jer. lii. 24-7: see also note on vi. 14).

11, 12. These verses are omitted in LXX; and it is easier to believe that a copyist or translator omitted them as superfluous than that Ezekiel, in the excitement of his vision and his utterance, could not have so repeated himself; they are thus probably genuine.

13 the nations that are round about you. And it came to pass, when I prophesied, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?

14 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
15 Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel, all of them, *are they* unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get

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13. Those who hold that the whole 'vision scheme' is a literary artifice explain this verse by supposing that the death of Pelatiah suggested the entire 'prophecy' (verses 5-12) to Ezekiel; this does credit neither to Ezekiel's sincerity nor to his literary skill. Davidson thinks that the death of Pelatiah may be symbolical, and that he may actually have died soon after the prophecy (cf. Jer. xxviii. 17). Far more natural is it to suppose that Ezekiel, by clairvoyance, saw a council which was taking place about this time, felt his spirit roused against it in indignant 'prophecy,' and then saw one of its members fall dead, and trembled at the thought of the judgement which he had been pronouncing.

the remnant: those who were left in Jerusalem after the first deportation; Ezekiel had uttered the same cry in ix. 8.

xi. 14-25. *The last words before Yahweh's departure.* Once more the prophet finds a 'text' in the words, or the attitude, of the Judaean leaders; their selfish and entirely unjustified tone of superiority to the exiles is the occasion of a prophecy that the exiles shall at the last be restored—the first prophecy of anything but destruction, and the first words from Yahweh which refer directly to the community of which Ezekiel was a member. How different is the tone of vi. 8. As in the latter chapters, where the prophecy is worked out with far more detail, the order is, first, restoration; and second, the new heart. This promise contrasts strongly with the final announcement of the ruin of the present inhabitants of Jerusalem. With this the long-delayed departure from the city at last takes place; Ezekiel, emerging from his trance, finds himself once more with the exiles, and he describes the visions to them.

15. all the house of Israel. Note the fullness of the expression following the double 'brethren.' It implies that the exiles from the northern kingdom, after the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C., are also in the prophet's mind.

Get you far from the LORD. To be dragged from the land

you far from the LORD; unto us is this land given for
a possession: therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: 16
Whereas I have removed them far off among the nations,
and whereas I have scattered them among the countries,
yet will I be to them a sanctuary for a little while in the
countries where they are come. Therefore say, Thus 17
saith the Lord GOD: I will gather you from the
peoples, and assemble you out of the countries where
ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land
of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall 18
take away all the detestable things thereof and all the
abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them 19
one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you;

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was to be removed from Yahweh: cf. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. The remnant in Jerusalem, 'the poorest sort of the people of the land' (2 Kings xxiv. 14), regard themselves as sole possessors of Yahweh's land and of his favour. The imperative 'Get you far' should probably be read (without change of consonants) as the Jewish commentators suggested, in the indicative, 'Ye are far.' Ezekiel's own attitude is that it is not the land but the temple which sanctifies. The irony of this reference is specially bitter when it is so quickly followed by verse 23.

16. a little while. The words mean 'slightly,' either of time or extent. Such a limitation by Yahweh on his promise reads strangely; better, therefore (as the second rendering in R.V. marg.), 'and I have been'—thus accepting for the moment the taunt of the Jerusalemites. 'Sanctuary' means that which confers the holiness of the temple; in the land of exile, Yahweh could only be this to them in the matter of sabbaths and circumcision. It is possible that Ezekiel means here to foretell that the exile will be of short duration; but he does not elsewhere refer to its duration in any way; contrast Isa. xlvi. 13, li. 5, lvi. 1.

18. The third person (cf. verse 16) is here resumed. The first consequence of the return is the purification of the land (cf. Introd. p. 17).

19. one heart: this would be appropriate if the prophet had been speaking of disunion among the exiles. Here we should rather read 'another heart'; so LXX, with only a minute change. The language and the thought alike have been suggested by Deuteronomy and Jeremiah (cf. xxxvi. 26; Deut. v. 29, x. 16,

of man, thou dwellest in the midst of the rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not, which have ears to hear, and hear not; for they are a rebellious house.
3 Therefore, thou son of man, prepare thee stuff for removing, and remove by day in their sight; and thou shalt remove from thy place to another place in their

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grasp. This is especially true of Israel's guilt (chap. xvi, the like of which had never yet been heard by Jewish ears); the prediction of the closing scene (xvii. 11–21) and the treatment of the question of the individual (chap. xviii, which rests partly on chap. xiv, partly on chaps. viii and iii). At the same time, the suggestion of rescue or restoration, first heard in xi. 18–20, is clearer, and we have the following three conceptions, as yet imperfectly correlated :—the principle of individual responsibility demands the protection of the righteous and of the repentant sinner (xiii. 23, xviii. 27), and must, when understood, mean obedience to Yahweh (xiv. 11); if the sinner escapes the impending ruin, it is but to enforce further the lesson of Yahweh's unbending justice (xiv. 22); and the reign of disobedience must at last be brought to an end by Yahweh's gift of the new heart. Nothing is as yet said of a peaceful restoration to Palestine; but the still more far-reaching conviction is attained (all the more significant in view of preceding discourses) that Yahweh's will is salvation and not merely punishment, and that the inevitable death of the unrepentant can give him no delight.

xii. 1–20. *The certainty and nearness of the future exile.*

1–8. If the exiles refused to hear, they are now to see. If we may assume that they assembled each day, or at stated days, to hear the prophet, they now find another symbolic act substituted for the usual discourse.

2. eyes to see: one of the most frequent condemnations of Israel: cf. Isa. vi. 9; Jer. v. 21; Deut. xxxix. 3; Mark viii. 18; Acts xxviii. 27. In Ps. cxv. 5 the same language is used of idol deities.

3. stuff for removing: the scanty equipment for the exiles' journey—staff, sandals, knapsack, drinking-cup, &c., such as may be seen on the Assyrian monuments.

remove: the word is specially used of exile; so R.V. marg. Here the whole process of preparation is included.

by day: i.e. openly; the actual journey would take place in the cool of the evening or at night (verse 4).

from thy place. Ezekiel does not say where he went; even

sight: it may be they will consider, though they be
a rebellious house. And thou shalt bring forth thy stuff 4
by day in their sight, as stuff for removing: and thou
shalt go forth thyself at even in their sight, as when men
go forth into exile. Dig thou through the wall in their 5
sight, and carry out thereby. In their sight shalt thou 6
bear it upon thy shoulder, and carry it forth in the dark;
thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground:
for I have set thee for a sign unto the house of Israel.
And I did so as I was commanded: I brought forth my 7
stuff by day, as stuff for removing, and in the even I
digged through the wall with mine hand; I brought it
forth in the dark, and bare it upon my shoulder in their
sight. And in the morning came the word of the LORD 8

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if he actually leaves the limits of the settlement he is back there next morning.

it may be they, &c. Here Ezekiel seems to attribute his own uncertainty to Yahweh.

5. Dig . . . through the wall. Since verse 10 seems to connect the action with Zedekiah, this digging has, by Smend, been interpreted of Zedekiah's sortie and attempted escape (2 Kings xxv. 4); the covering of the face (verse 6) will then refer to Zedekiah's blinding at Riblah. But verse 10 refers the action to the people in general as well as the king. The question whether Tel-abib had a city wall through which Ezekiel could dig a hole is unimportant, not because, as Davidson suggests, 'the actions were probably not actually performed,' but because it would be quite enough for Ezekiel to dig through the wall of his own dwelling. We need not imagine that Ezekiel sets his 'stuff' ready outside, and then takes it inside again to pull it through the hole with him.

6. dark: pitch darkness is here meant.

cover thy face. This can hardly refer to Zedekiah's blinding, for that did not take place till the flight was over. We must suppose that the fugitive king, to whom this action is applied in verse 12, throws a cloak over his head to avoid recognition. Did Ezekiel foresee but refrain from explicitly foretelling Zedekiah's fate? The more probable meaning is that Zedekiah in his last journey was not even to see the land he was deserting. Compare Carlyle's graphic description of the flight to Varennes (*French Revolution*, vol. ii. bk. iv).

8. in the morning. The concreteness of the whole account

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8. in the morning. The concreteness of the whole account

9 unto me, saying, Son of man, hath not the house of
Israel, the rebellious house, said unto thee, What doest
10 thou? Say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD:
This burden *concerneth* the prince in Jerusalem, and all
11 the house of Israel among whom they are. Say, I am
your sign: like as I have done, so shall it be done unto
12 them: they shall go into exile, into captivity. And the
prince that is among them shall bear upon his shoulder
in the dark, and shall go forth: they shall dig through
the wall to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face,
13 because he shall not see the ground with his eyes. My
net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken
in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon to the
land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he
14 shall die there. And I will scatter toward every wind
all that are round about him to help him, and all his
15 bands; and I will draw out the sword after them. And
they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall disperse
them among the nations, and scatter them through the

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is another difficulty in the way of the view that we have here only a literary device. Ezekiel must surely have known the purpose of what he had been doing; Yahweh's interpretation is given at the point in the story where Ezekiel gives it to his countrymen.

9-16. The interpretation.

10. prince. Ezekiel's usual expression for the kings of Judah. The Hebrew expression involves one of Ezekiel's grim plays on words, and may be represented as 'the leader is this load in Jerusalem'; the word for 'burden' is at once literal and metaphorical. This, however, leaves the second part of the verse very difficult. The text and the margin ('that are among them') of the R.V. are equally possible translations of the Hebrew, but to whom does the word 'they' refer? It is better to omit 'the prince' (the words might rise from an anticipation of verse 12), and read 'that are in the midst of her,' i.e. Jerusalem.

12. ground, or as in margin, 'land.' See note on verse 6.

13. yet shall he not see it. Davidson suggests that, in editing his book, Ezekiel may have made the references to Zedekiah's blinding more distinct; it is more satisfactory, however, to sup-

countries. But I will leave a few men of them from the 16
sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; that
they may declare all their abominations among the
nations whither they come; and they shall know that I
am the LORD.

Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 17
Son of man, eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy 18
water with trembling and with carefulness; and say unto 19
the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the land of Israel:
They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their
water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate
from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them
that dwell therein. And the cities that are inhabited 20
shall be laid waste, and the land shall be a desolation;
and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son 21, 22

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pose that Ezekiel had a presentiment of the blinding, which the mention of the cloak drew out into expression.

16. a few men. Ezekiel's doctrine of the 'remnant' is strikingly different from that of earlier prophets. The thought here is repeated and amplified in xiv. 22, 23. The heathen cannot then say 'where is now their God?' (Ps. lxxix. 10).

17–20. A further prophecy of the coming desolation.

18. with quaking. The prophet is here commanded to take the plainest food, such as fugitives might eat, and consume it with every sign of fear and haste.

carefulness: the word means dread or anxious care, as if the delay caused by eating might lead to discovery and capture.

19. her land: i. e. the land that is dependent on, or belongs to, the capital, Jerusalem.

xii. 21–6. *Fulfilment is not to be delayed.* This section belongs both to the preceding and the following prophecies. Ezekiel first rebukes those who assure him that he need not trouble them as yet with these messages, and then he naturally turns (in chap. xiii) to the false predictors who are the real sources of this fatal assurance.

of man, what is this proverb that ye have in the land of
Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision
23 faileth? Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord God:
I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more
use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, The
24 days are at hand, and the effect of every vision. For
there shall be no more any vain vision nor flattering
25 divination within the house of Israel. For I am the
Lord; I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall
be performed; it shall be no more deferred: for in your
days, O rebellious house, will I speak the word, and will
perform it, saith the Lord God.

26, 27 Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Son
of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The
vision that he seeth is for many days to come, and he
28 prophesieth of times that are far off. Therefore say
unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: There shall none
of my words be deferred any more, but the word which
I shall speak shall be performed, saith the Lord God.

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22. proverb. Cf. xi. 3, xvi. 44, xviii. 2; a 'popular saying.'

the land of Israel. Ezekiel speaks as if he were in Jerusalem, at the side of Jeremiah. The connexion between the exiles and the still standing kingdom was close enough for the 'proverb,' like his own prophecies, to be known in both places; see verse 27.

faileth. The word almost implies a personification of the vision. Cp. 2 Pet. iii. 4. Such an attitude was not wholly unnatural. Isaiah had prophesied the fall of Jerusalem, as well as its salvation. Manasseh ought to have died in exile, and Josiah should have ended his days in peace. Ezekiel, however, like Jeremiah, was justified (see xxxiii. 21) as no other prophet had been, except Isaiah in 701 B.C.

24. Cf. xiii. 10, 16; 1 Kings xxii. 6; and Jer. viii. 11, xiv. 14, xxviii. 2-4, for such 'vain visions.'

26-8. 'The two sections, verses 21-25 and 26-28, are parallel predictions, probably written at different times' (Toy). In the second section the popular attitude is not that prophecy is weak and nerveless, but that it refers to a distant and negligible future; and the prophet's reply omits the 'in your days' of verse 25.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son **13** 2
of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that
prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy
out of their own heart, Hear ye the word of the
LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD: Woe unto the foolish 3

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xiii. *The false prophets and prophetesses.* Ezekiel passes naturally from this ill-founded confidence to its real originators. We meet in the O. T. with three classes of deceivers—(1) false prophets, (2) prophets of Baal, (3) wizards, witches, possessors of 'familiar spirits,' &c. The gap between (1) and (2) would seem to be less clear than that separating both from (3). The prophecy of Yahweh would be as easily confused with that of Baal as was his ritual. The prophet at a shrine of Baal might say, 'Thus saith Yahweh,' and be a prophet of Baal still. What really separated the true prophet from classes (1) and (2) alike was his moral insight. Prediction with him was secondary; with them it was primary. So in the N. T., the material of prophecy (true and false) is psychic; a bad man may be thrown into a rapture, foretell the future, speak with tongues, convert sinners, and cast out devils; it is the difference of spirit which makes Christ able to acknowledge some, while He says to others, 'I never knew you.'

This chapter shows that the gap between the first two classes and the third was not so great as might have been supposed. All shared in a 'superficial conventionalism' (Toy). Balaam was called a prophet; the witch of Endor never was; yet when once prediction was looked for, and offered, divination, and its 'hocus-pocus' of amulets, spirits, and mystic voices was never far off. Compare the stories of Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 40) and Micaiah (1 Kings xxii. 6); also Isa. xxx. 10; Amos ii. 12; Jer. ii. 8, v. 31, xiv. 14, xxiii. 9 ff., xxix. 15, 21, 24 ff. For an interesting discussion of the whole question, see A. B. Bruce, *Moral Order of the World*, chap. v. Studies in the temptation to false prophecy will be found in Kingsley's *Hypatia* and Browning's *Mr. Sludge the Medium*.

xiii. 1-7. *The guilt of the false prophets.* Cf. Deut. xiii. 1 ff.

2. prophets of Israel. See note on xii. 22.

out of their own heart: i. e. their predictions are based on their own wishes,—a concise definition of false prophecy. The true prophet will never speak till he can say, 'The word of Yahweh came unto me saying,' &c. 'Heart' is the general word for the emotions and desires; the spirit which inspires them is not Yahweh's, but their own.

3. foolish: the word in Hebrew makes a jingling assonance with the word for 'prophet.' It is elsewhere translated 'churl,'

prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seer
4 nothing! O Israel, thy prophets have been like foxes ir
5 the waste places. Ye have not gone up into the gaps
neither made up the fence for the house of Israel, tc
6 stand in the battle in the day of the LORD. They hav
seen vanity and lying divination, that say, The LORI
saith; and the LORD hath not sent them: and they hav
made men to hope that the word should be confirmed
7 Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoker
a lying divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith
albeit I have not spoken?

8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Because ye hav
spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I an
9 against you, saith the Lord GOD. And mine hand shal

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and appears, in 1 Sam. xxv. 3, as the name of Abigail's churlisl husband. In Gen. xxxiv. 7; Judges xx. 6; Jer. xxix. 23, &c., i is used of adultery or licentiousness: cf. Jer. xxiii. 14. Folly, ii the O.T., always implies more or less of moral guilt rather thai mere intellectual incapacity: cf. Proverbs *passim*. The excellen note on this verse in Davidson's *Ezekiel* should be consulted.

4. Ezekiel distinguishes himself from these professional prophets as completely as did Amos (vii. 10–17).

foxes: because of their connexion with ruins ('waste places')

5. To do this Ezekiel himself had at least attempted from th beginning: cf. also xxii. 30.

gaps. R.V. marg. 'breaches.' Cf. Isa. xxx. 13.

the day of the LORD: to the popular expectation, the da of Yahweh's deliverance of his people; to the prophets, the da of Yahweh's punishment of their sins: cf. Amos v. 18; Isa. ii. 12 iii. 18, vii. 20. Here the phrase is used for the day on whicl Yahweh summons his people to his standard to protect his land.

6. they have made men to hope: better as R.V. marg., 'the have hoped.' The causal sense of the word is very doubtful, an less effective. The prophets know no more about the future thai the dupes who listen to their guesswork; they can only hope th guesses will be fortunate.

xiii. 8–16. *The punishment of the deceivers.* When their prophesies of safety and prosperity are falsified by the approachin calamities, they will be among the first to suffer.

9. mine hand shall be against, &c. Almost the same phrase a

be against the prophets that see vanity, and that divine
lies: they shall not be in the council of my people,
neither shall they be written in the writing of the house
of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel;
and ye shall know that I am the Lord God. Because, 10
even because they have seduced my people, saying,
Peace; and there is no peace; and when one buildeth up
a wall, behold, they daub it with untempered *mortar*: say 11
unto them which daub it with untempered *mortar*, that
it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and

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that which Ezekiel uses for his own ecstasies; here in a hostile sense.

council: originally the word means 'couch' or 'custom' (Ps. lv. 15, Job xix. 19); then, as R. V. margin here, 'secret'; so in Prov. xi. 13, xx. 19, xxv. 9; Amos iii. 7.

my people: a naturally rare phrase in the first half of the book.

writing: R. V. margin 'register.' Bertholet believes that such a roll of full Israelite citizens had been kept since the ninth century B.C. Cf. Exod. xxxii. 32; Heb. xii. 23. Here Ezekiel is thinking of a future restoration. The deceivers are high in influence now; afterwards they will not even have a place in the nation itself. As yet this restoration has hardly been hinted at; but the guilt of the prophets implies comparative guiltlessness in the rest of the nation. It may be privileged to enter the land after exile; they must remain outside. Cf. Rev. xxi. 27.

10. a wall. Cf. verse 5. Walls, both literal and metaphorical, were sorely needed at this time. The false prophets persuaded the people that they could regard as defence what was no defence at all (e. g. the help of Egypt, or the earlier prophecies of Yahweh). The word for 'wall' is not used elsewhere; the margin gives 'slight wall.' A cognate Babylonian word, meaning 'wall,' is also used for what is small and mean (i. e. enclosed or circumscribed). However slight the defence, they set to work with dangerous haste to make it appear trustworthy and secure; but the mortar they use will be of no avail. While pretending to lead, they only assist—and their assistance is a fresh source of danger.

untempered: the word (chosen, perhaps, because in sound it suggests the word for 'fall') means whitewash or plaster. Cf. Matt. xxiii. 27.

11. and ye: instead of this sudden change to the second person

ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind
12 shall rend it. Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be
said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have
13 daubed it? Therefore thus saith the Lord God; I will
even rend it with a stormy wind in my fury; and there
shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great
14 hailstones in fury to consume it. So will I break down
the wall that ye have daubed with untempered *mortar*,
and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation
thereof shall be discovered: and it shall fall, and ye shall
be consumed in the midst thereof; and ye shall know
15 that I am the Lord. Thus will I accomplish my fury
upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with
untempered *mortar*; and I will say unto you, The wall
16 is no more, neither they that daubed it; *to wit*, the
prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem,
and which see visions of peace for her, and there is no
peace, saith the Lord God.

Kraetzschmar suggests 'there shall come an overflowing shower, and great hailstones shall fall'; the alteration is slight, and the parallel with verse 13 is thereby preserved.

13. Cf. Matt. vii. 24–7.

14. The discourse now passes from picture to reality; in the coming calamities, the false confidence created or fortified by the deceivers will be destroyed, and they will be ruined in its destruction.

discovered: uncovered, laid bare. Cf. Ps. xxix. 9, where 'discovereth' of the A. V. has been changed in R. V. to 'strippeth bare.'

16. Smend, Siegfried, and Davidson regard this verse, with plausibility, as an exclamation or address.

and there is no peace. Cf. Isa. vi. 14, viii. 11; Mic. iii. 5.

xiii. 17–23. Ezekiel now turns to the women who professed to read the future for payment (verse 19), and, as he hints, were the allies of the false prophets in foretelling a future on principles entirely divorced from morality (verse 22). Ezekiel is writing for those who are familiar with the practices and properties of these

And thou, son of man, set thy face against the 17
daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their
own heart; and prophesy thou against them, and say, 18
Thus saith the Lord God: Woe to the women that sew
pillows upon all elbows, and make kerchiefs for the head
of *persons of* every stature to hunt souls! Will ye hunt
the souls of my people, and save souls alive for your-
selves? And ye have profaned me among my people for 19

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forerunners of modern palmists and fortune-tellers; and we have no satisfactory data for interpreting his allusions. It is clear, however, that Ezekiel's attack is levelled at these miserable creatures, not because they foretell the future, correctly or incorrectly, but because by so doing they predict success to the wicked, who are of course at this time in the majority, and disaster to those who are righteous but uninfluential. True prophetesses, however, are also referred to in the O. T.—Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, and Noadiah.

17. out of their own heart: cf. verse 2.

18. pillows. The word should be connected with the Assyrian word meaning 'bind'; amulets of some sort are meant; verse 20 shows that the prophetesses wore these themselves also. The Hebrew word for 'hand' can also mean the 'forearm'; these fillets were tied, it would seem, to the elbows.

kerchiefs: mufflers or veils, long enough to reach to the ground. Bertholet compares these with the ephod, or oracular vesture of the priest or spokesman of the divine voice, and with the *Tallith* or prayer-robe of the later Jews; but the fact that these mufflers were worn not by the sorceress, but those who visited her, suggests a simpler explanation; the veil assisted the air of mystery with which it was useful to surround them.

19, 20. They degrade Yahweh's glory into a petty trade of huckstering and lies, of which the pay is miserable enough (cf. Prov. xxviii. 21; Amos ii. 6, 7), but which, by a blasphemous reversal of Yahweh's judgement, pronounces death against the righteous, and promises life to the sinners. There is an unmistakable reference here to the incantations which the sorceresses were doubtless prepared to utter against the innocent foes of their clients. These incantations, however, are to be of no avail; the spells will be broken, and the lives of the innocent will escape like birds loosed from the cage. Ezekiel lived in an atmosphere in which the power of such spells was generally believed in; nor is it indeed altogether killed by modern civilization and science. Tablets

handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people
20 that hearken unto lies. Wherefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against your pillows, wherewith ye there hunt the souls to make *them* fly, and I will tear them from your arms; and I will let the souls go, even
21 the souls that ye hunt to make *them* fly. Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be hunted;
22 and ye shall know that I am the Lord. Because with lies ye have grieved the heart of the righteous, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way,
23 and be saved alive: therefore ye shall no more see vanity, nor divine divinations: and I will deliver my people out of your hand; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

14 Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and
2 sat before me. And the word of the Lord came unto

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containing magical formulae have been found in great numbers on Babylonian sites.

19. profaned me: i. e. Yahweh's name, through being used by the sorceresses (taken in vain), is profaned or degraded to common and unholy purposes. Note that the payment to these women is 'in kind.'

20. to make them fly: this cannot refer to the sorceresses; they desired rather to capture than to scare away; hence, the margin is preferable ('as birds').

23. vanity: as in Ecclesiastes and elsewhere, 'futility,' 'delusion': cf. xxxi. 6; Jonah ii. 8.

xiv. 1–11. From the wickedness of the professed mouthpieces of God Ezekiel now turns to the wickedness of those who inquire of God. In those who sit before him he detects an insincerity which will bring punishment upon men who visit the true as well as the false prophet; this, however, does not of itself exonerate the prophet, who is responsible for the truth of his predictions, and the clearness of his insight into God's purposes.

1. the elders: cf. viii. 1, xx. 1.

me, saying, Son of man, these men have taken their idols 3
into their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their
iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at all
by them? Therefore speak unto them, and say unto 4
them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Every man of the
house of Israel that taketh his idols into his heart, and
putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face,
and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him
therein according to the multitude of his idols; that I 5
may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because
they are all estranged from me through their idols.
Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the 6
Lord GOD: Return ye, and turn yourselves from your
idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.
For every one of the house of Israel, or of the 7
strangers that sojourn in Israel, which separateth himself

3, 4. into their heart. A striking phrase. We know that the exile broke the power of idolatry among the Jews; and we nowhere learn definitely from Ezekiel that idols were worshipped in the community of Tel-abib, though that the exiles should have brought such worship with them in 597 B. C. would not have been strange. The contemptuous pictures of idolatry in Isaiah xl–lxvi obviously refer to the heathenism which surrounded the exiles; the descriptions of the debased worship of Yahweh probably refer to what was done in Palestine before or after the exile. But the exiles' condition was more dangerous; they had seated the selfishness and immorality of the old idolatry in the midst of their desires and hopes. How could they seek Yahweh's will to any real purpose? The only answer they could receive would echo their sinful thoughts. Cf. 1 Kings xxii. 6–23, especially verse 15: also the story in the *Iliad* (Bk. i) of the evil dream sent to Agamemnon. Cf. 'in their own heart' (verse 5).

5. that I may take. What we should set down as an inevitable consequence of their sin Ezekiel exhibits, characteristically, as the direct purpose of Yahweh.

7. the strangers. The phrase shows how completely Ezekiel was still, in thought, within the old and undivided Israel. Ezekiel's care for these 'resident aliens' is shown in xxii. 7, 29 and xlvii. 22 (see note thereon).

The word translated 'strangers' in vii. 21, xi. 9, xvi. 32, &c., is

from me, and taketh his idols into his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet to inquire for himself of me;
8 I the LORD will answer him by myself: and I will set my face against that man, and will make him an astonishment, for a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know
9 that I am the LORD. And if the prophet be deceived and speaketh a word, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.
10 And they shall bear their iniquity: the iniquity of the prophet shall be even as the iniquity of him that seeketh
11 *unto him*; that the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither defile themselves any more with all their transgressions; but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord GOD.

12, 13 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son

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distinct, and means 'foreigners'; the *Ger* (the word used here) is placed on a level with the widow, the orphan, and the 'Levite that is within your gates,' who had no patrimony of his own (Deut. xxvi. 11 and 12). In a society where citizenship and property went together, the position of each of these classes was precarious.

9. A different principle is embodied in the story of Balaam, who, in spite of himself, is forced to tell the unwelcome truth. The sin of the prophet is like that of the inquirer; each wants his own will, not God's. *Quem Deus vult perdere*—or *punire*—*prius dementat.*

I... have deceived that prophet. Cf. iii. 20: 'I lay a stumbling-block before him.' See introductory note to chap. xiii. If a man uses the gift of prophecy wrongly, the gift, and therefore the giver, turn upon him and deceive him.

10. bear their iniquity: i. e. bear its responsibility and its consequences.

11. Cf. xi. 20; the purpose of punishment is warning and peace.

xiv. 12-23. The question of the responsibility of the prophet, thus raised, suggests the larger problem of general responsibility. The

of man, when a land sinneth against me by committing a trespass, and I stretch out mine hand upon it, and break the staff of the bread thereof, and send famine upon it, and cut off from it man and beast; though these 14
three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD. If I cause noisome beasts to pass 15
through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts;

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righteous cannot deliver the wicked. This thesis is expounded with a fullness and emphasis which suggests that the prophet is replying to some objection. What that objection was can be gathered from verses 22, 23. Is there not, the exiles would seem to have asked, a remnant to be saved? Was not this the prediction of former prophets? After pressing home his main contention Ezekiel admits this instance of an exception; 'yes, the remnant shall escape from their doomed city; and the sight of the misery which they will then endure will prove a consolation to you for your own sufferings; you will recognize that the fall of the city is due not to caprice or neglect, but to justice.' Contrast xxi. 3, 4 (and notes *ad loc.*). The thought of this section leads immediately to its twofold elaboration in chaps. xvi and xviii. D. H. Müller points out that the form of this passage is poetic; for the fourfold ruin compare vi. 11.

13. a land. The case is put in general terms; only one land, however, could be in the mind of the prophet or his hearers.

14. Three outstanding and well-known righteous men are here referred to. The mention of Noah is appropriate enough; he was able only to save his own family from the universal destruction of the flood (cf. verse 16). The reason for the mention of Daniel is not so clear. Ezekiel can hardly be referring to the youth mentioned in the book called by his name—who is at the court of Nebuchadnezzar, and who is only reaching his maturity at the conquest of Babylon; but that book was written long after the events to which it refers; probably to its author, as to Ezekiel, Daniel was a name honoured by a vague tradition of wisdom and sanctity (cf. xxviii. 3). Job is referred to as the third of these typical 'righteous men.' Again, there is no allusion to the story of Job as we know it. Were it not for this mention we should not have known that the name of Job was familiar to Israelite ears. The book of Job is recognized to be considerably later than Ezekiel. Cf. Jer. xv. 1. Contrast Gen. xviii. 32.

16 though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the
Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters;
they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be
17 desolate. Or if I bring a sword upon that land, and say,
Sword, go through the land; so that I cut off from it
18 man and beast; though these three men were in it, as I
live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither sons
nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered them-
19 selves. Or if I send a pestilence into that land, and
pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man
20 and beast: though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as
I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither
son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls
21 by their righteousness. For thus saith the Lord God:
How much more when I send my four sore judgements
upon Jerusalem, the sword, and the famine, and the
noisome beasts, and the pestilence, to cut off from it
22 man and beast? Yet, behold, therein shall be left a rem-
nant that shall be carried forth, both sons and daughters:
behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall
see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted
concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem,
23 even concerning all that I have brought upon it. And
they shall comfort you, when ye see their way and their

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20. The phrase here is varied from the plural ('sons') to the singular.

22. The explanation of the apparent exception which really proves the rule. The remnant does not escape punishment.

unto you, to Babylon. That there was to be such a remnant was prophesied in Mic. ii. 12; Isa. vii. 3, viii. 2, ix. 12, &c.; Zeph. iii. 12; Jer. xxiii. 3; it is therefore quite unnecessary to suppose that this passage was only written after the actual appearance of the survivors in Babylon in 587 B.C., in order to justify Ezekiel's own prophecies in vii. 13 and ix. 4. A different reason has already been given for the existence of a remnant in xii. 16.

23. comfort. A 'very different comfort' from that foretold in doings: and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son **15** 2
of man, what is the vine tree more than any tree, the
vine branch which is among the trees of the forest?
Shall wood be taken thereof to make any work? or will 3
men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, 4

Jer. xxxi. 13 and announced in Isa. xl. 1. It is akin to the grim thought of xxxi. 16 and xxxii. 31, that the inhabitants of the world of the dead will find some ease in their suffering when others come to join their fate; but there is also the recognition that when God's judgements are seen to be rational and moral, there must be some consolation for those who might have fancied that there was no reason in their affliction. That such suffering was abundantly deserved is made clear by chap. xvi, which implies the guilt both of those who had been already punished by exile, and of those who were being reserved for the further disaster in Jerusalem.

xv. *The Parable of the Vine.* This short chapter may be read either as an interlude or as a prelude to chap. xvi. In any case the sequence of thought is clear. Ezekiel has explained the reason for the oft-repeated prophecy of the salvation of the remnant. Now he faces another thought. Is not the nation the beloved vine of Yahweh? how can she, then, be doomed? Passages like Hos. x. 1; Isa. v. 1; Jer. ii. 21, would be familiar to him and his hearers; but once more he gives a wholly unexpected turn to the thought which has occurred; as regards real utility, this very vine is the most worthless of all trees. By his reference to the 'trees of the forest' (verse 2) and his silence as to the fruit, Ezekiel suggests that Israel is no more than a wild vine. As the consistent foe of the innovations and syncretism of Canaanite society and religion, he has no sympathy with the characteristic Canaanite institution of vine-culture. Wine would suggest to him, as it did to the other prophets, the wanton accompaniments of idolatrous feasts (cf. Amos vi. 6, ix. 14; Hos. iv. 11, ix. 4; Isa. v. 11, xxviii. 7: compare Ezek. xliv. 21; contrast Ps. civ. 15). Ezekiel recurs to the simile of the vine in chaps. xvii and xix, but in a mood hardly less sombre. Contrast the reference to the vine in John xv, and its exposition, perhaps influenced by both chapters, in Mrs. King's *Disciples* (*Ugo Bassi*).

3. The wood of the vine is so useless that you cannot even make a peg out of it.

it is cast into the fire for fuel: the fire hath devoured both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned; is it
5 profitable for any work? Behold, when it was whole, it was meet for no work: how much less, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned, shall it yet be meet for
6 any work? Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of
7 Jerusalem. And I will set my face against them; they shall go forth from the fire, but the fire shall devour
8 them; and ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I set my face against them. And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord GOD.

16 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

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4. is burned. Cf. Amos iv: 'Ye were as a brand plucked out of the burning.' Ephraim is already destroyed; so is Judah; the remnant left in Jerusalem is really in no better case. Does the use of the perfect tense imply that Jerusalem is already fallen, or, at least, besieged? This is denied by verse 6 ('So will I give') and also by the use of the word here employed, which (from xxiv. 10; Job xxx. 30; Isa. xxiv. 6) implies shrivelling or charring as much as actual destruction.

7. To have survived one catastrophe will not save them from another: cf. xi. 16.

8. trespass: the same word occurs in xiv. 13, and means properly treachery; not of Zedekiah's broken oath to Nebuchadnezzar (chap. xvii), but, as in xiv. 13, of the disloyalty of Israel to her covenant with Yahweh—the thought of which occupies chap. xvi.

xvi. *The Harlotry of Jerusalem, and its punishment.* As the fate of Jerusalem and the questions connected with it (considered in chaps. xiv, xv) grow clearer in the mind of the prophet, he pauses to consider the whole history of the people, and in a long and comprehensive discourse he expounds the history of Israel in the very thinly-veiled allegory of a foundling child; her early beauty (verses 1–14); her adulterous excesses (verses 15–34); her inevitable punishment (verses 35–43); the wickedness that has outdone Sodom and Samaria (verses 44–59); and her final restoration (verses 60–63). The figure of outraged marital love,

Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, 2
and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem: Thy 3
birth and thy nativity is of the land of the Canaanite;

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like the description of a call and a commission, links Ezekiel to his predecessors, especially to Hosea (chaps. i–iii) and Jeremiah (chap. iii). The thought of Yahweh as married to his people frequently appears in the prophets (cf. Amos iii. 2; Isa. i. 21, vi. 24: cf. Rev. xxi. 9), and is common to other Semitic religions, where it was the cause of much licentious ritual; to the purer minds of the seers of Israel it meant that all falling away from Yahweh was as shameful as adultery; such is the burden of this chapter, as of chaps. xx and xxiii.

But Ezekiel takes an even darker view of history than the earlier prophets. Amos (v. 25), Hosea (ix. 10), Isaiah (i. 21–26), and Jeremiah (ii. 2) imply a period of loyalty and obedience. To them Israel's sins begin after the entrance into Canaan; the worship of Baal corrupted that of Yahweh. Ezekiel traces Israel's unfaithfulness right back to Egypt (chap. xx). Both the earlier ('prophetic') and the later ('priestly') narratives of the Pentateuch are explicit as to Israel's apostasy in the wilderness. In chap. xx Ezekiel asserts that Yahweh was known and disobeyed even before the Exodus. In the earlier narratives (of Joshua, the Judges, Samuel, and David) there is no hint of this settled rebelliousness; the relations between Yahweh and his people are described there as on the whole natural and unstrained; but it is not strange that later writers, looking back in the darker days of the seventh and sixth centuries, should regard the nation's story as one long crime. And it is this view of history which has dominated the whole historical tradition of Israel; even the rise of the kingship is regarded as a falling away from Yahweh, just as, after Ezekiel's time, the very existence of the northern kingdom was an act of schism. To the Jewish writer, history was valuable, not as the record of past events, but as the illustration and enforcement of an eternal principle. This reference to sexual impurity, as typical of the loathsomeness of all sin, is found nowhere outside Judaism and Christianity.

xvi. 1–14. The miserable birth of Israel; her rescue by Yahweh, and his loving care over her in her girlhood.

3. the land of the Canaanite. It is noteworthy that Ezekiel does not in these chapters refer to the patriarchs (contrast chaps. xxxiii. 24, xxviii. 25, xxxvii. 25); and in this chapter he only hints at the sojourn in Egypt (verse 7). He speaks of Israel as a Canaanite tribe, sprung from the original inhabitants of the land, and hence of a stained and corrupted lineage (in spite of the contention of chap. xviii).

the Amorite was thy father, and thy mother was an
4 Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast
born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in
water to cleanse thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor
5 swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of
these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou
wast cast out in the open field, for that thy person was
6 abhorred, in the day that thou wast born. And when I
passed by thee, and saw thee weltering in thy blood, I
said unto thee, *Though thou art* in thy blood, live; yea,
7 I said unto thee, *Though thou art* in thy blood, live. I
caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou

Amorite: cf. Gen. xv. 6; Amos ii. 9, &c., where the Amorites are spoken of as the original inhabitants of Palestine. The cuneiform name for Palestine is 'Land of the Amorites,' though this was later restricted to North Palestine. Properly, the Amorites were the highlanders, as the Canaanites with their iron chariots and their wealth were the lowlanders.

Hittite: the Hittites appear as the earlier inhabitants in Gen. x. 15, &c.; so in the Tel-el-Amarna letters; in Judges i. 10 the people of Hebron (called Hittites in Gen. xxiii. 3, 10) are called Canaanites. They must be distinguished from the powerful Hittites of the north. Cf. Deut. xxvi. 5.

4. cleanse: A.V. 'supple.' The word, which is not translated by the LXX, does not occur elsewhere; the cognate Assyrian word means washing, necessary, in the Semitic world, on ritual as well as physical grounds.

salted. This rite is still customary; salt is also the recognized medium of a covenant.

5. the open field: a very realistic description of exposure. In Arabian tribes girls were often deserted after birth, or buried alive (Qor. lxxxi. 8). Compare Hos. i. 6.

6. weltering: referring to the random kicking movements of an infant's feet; the word occurs only here and in verse 22.

Though thou art **in thy blood, live:** i. e. filthy and neglected as you are, you are to live, and not die. Most commentators agree with the LXX that the repetition is an error. Smend suggests that the first of the two sentences might go with what precedes, and the second with what follows. Yahweh speaks in sharp contrast to the neglect of the child's own parents.

7. The historical reference of verse 6 is apparently to the rescue

didst increase and wax great, and thou attainedst to excellent ornament; thy breasts were fashioned, and thine hair was grown; yet thou wast naked and bare.
Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, 8
behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith
the Lord GOD, and thou becamest mine. Then washed 9
I thee with water; yea, I throughly washed away thy
blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed 10
thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with sealskin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and covered thee

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from famine in Canaan; verse 7 will then describe the growth of the nation in Egypt.

excellent ornament: probably the word implies a reference to the girl's growth to physical maturity.

naked and bare: she was only a poor Bedouin girl still; a reference to the poverty of the desert shepherds who found their way into Egypt from time to time, and left it as poor as they entered it.

8. I spread my skirt, or mantle, as part of the ceremony of marriage; compare the German 'Mantelkind,' and Ruth iii. 9. Israel entered into covenant with Yahweh at Sinai.

9. Kraetzschmar would place this verse immediately after verse 6; this would be so obvious a position that we should hardly expect it in that case to have been altered. A ceremonial washing took place before marriage (Ruth iii. 3; Esther ii. 12; Judith x. 3). Not until this point is the girl taken from her squalid surroundings. Observe that everything is done for her by her protector.

10. sealskin: in Exod. xxv. 5, Num. iv. 6 the material of one of the coverings of the ark; R.V. marg. 'porpoise.' The walrus and the dugong have been suggested. Delitzsch identifies it with the skin used for covering the planks of the boats on the Euphrates (cf. Herod. i. 194), or, when inflated, supporting them. This might seem too clumsy a material for a girl's sandals; Kraetzschmar suggests 'Egyptian leather.'

fine linen, or byssus; white, as worn by Egyptians (Gen. xli. 42) and priests (Exod. xxvi. 1).

covered, with a mantle reaching from head to foot.

11 with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put
12 bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And
I put a ring upon thy nose, and earrings in thine ears,
13 and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast
thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was
of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst
eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper unto royal
14 estate. And thy renown went forth among the nations
for thy beauty; for it was perfect, through my majesty
which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.

15 But thou didst trust in thy beauty, and playedst the
harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy

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silk: the word is obscure, and does not occur outside this chapter. Silk is not mentioned as dyed by the Phoenicians till after the sixth century B.C.

11. Ezekiel is still describing the usual attire of a wealthy Hebrew bride. Compare the remarkable catalogue of female ornaments in Isa. iii. 18–24.

12. crown: a bridal adornment which in this context suggests the kingdom; cf. 'unto royal estate' (which LXX omits) in verse 13.

13. fine flour: cf. verse 19; also Deut. xxxii. 13, 14; Ps. lxxxi. 16. Ezekiel does not mention wine, nor does he include wine among articles of sacrifice. Hebrews, like other Oriental peoples, were vegetarians, except on rare occasions.

14. This would be true of Israel in the palmy days of David and Solomon. Note how the allegory lends itself to Ezekiel's contention that all this beauty was entirely the gift of the nation's protector, Yahweh himself; and not a word is said of any love or gratitude on the side of the nation.

xvi. 15–34. With true literary insight the climax is made to introduce the contrast. Israel's blessings proved her fall. The literal truth begins at once to break through the metaphor. We grow more conscious of the rising indignation of the prophet as he advances; two kinds of guilt, however, are distinguished—that of the high places and the idolatry indigenous to Palestine, and that of the foreign worships.

15. because of thy renown. It was Solomon's success as a diplomatist which led him into the temptation of foreign religious

whoredoms on every one that passed by; his it was.
And thou didst take of thy garments, and madest for thee 16
igh places decked with divers colours, and playedst the
harlot upon them: *the like things* shall not come, neither
hall it be *so.* Thou didst also take thy fair jewels of 17
my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and
madest for thee images of men, and didst play the harlot
with them; and thou tookest thy broidered garments, 18
and coveredst them, and didst set mine oil and mine
ncense before them. My bread also which I gave thee, 19

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nfluences. Israel was ready to ally herself with and imitate 'every one that passed by'; the expression is strengthened in verse 25.

his it was: the phrase is not in the LXX, and seems to have been inserted by mistake from the words at the end of verses 16 and 19. If it stands, it should be translated 'let it be his,' as if the woman's own words are being quoted.

16. high places. The word has no Hebrew etymology, but is common in all parts of the O. T., and occurs on the Moabite Stone; these high places (which successive kings of Judah failed or refused to remove) were probably dedicated to Yahweh, but were regarded by Ezekiel and other prophets as idolatrous. The reference here must be to sacred tents on these hill-shrines. Cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 7.

The last clause of the verse cannot be translated save by making some very doubtful addition. Ewald suggests that the original words were 'Shame! abomination!'

17. Paul's account of the rise of idolatry in the Gentile world (Rom. i. 19-24) is strikingly similar. God makes Himself known; but human pride and selfishness misuse His gifts and His revelation; hence the shame and ruin of heathenism.

images of men. From the high places Ezekiel turns to the images. Carrying on the metaphor, he calls the figures images of rivals to the woman's true husband. The 'teraphim' may have been in human form (compare the story of Michal, 1 Sam. xix. 13); but Yahweh was oftener worshipped under the form of an ox. Some, comparing Isa. lvii. 8, have found here an allusion to the worship of the phallus: but of this there are no unambiguous traces in the O. T.

18. them: i. e. the idols. Yahweh's own gifts are thus squandered on his rivals. So also the oil and the incense are the gifts of the husband.

fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee,
thou didst even set it before them for a sweet savour,
20 and *thus* it was; saith the Lord God. Moreover thou
hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast
borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them
to be devoured. Were thy whoredoms a small matter,
21 that thou hast slain my children, and delivered them up,
in causing them to pass through *the fire* unto them?
22 And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou
hast not remembered the days of thy youth, when thou
wast naked and bare, and wast weltering in thy blood.
23 And it is come to pass after all thy wickedness, (woe,
24 woe unto thee! saith the Lord God,) that thou hast

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19. honey, as an offering to Yahweh, is forbidden, like leaven in Lev. ii. 11, and is not included in the offerings mentioned by Ezekiel in chaps. xl–xlviii. It was one of the most familiar products of Palestine, and was probably used in idolatrous rites; it was also offered to the gods of Babylonia, and occurred in Athenian ritual. The adulterous wife offered not only her clothes but her food to her paramours.

thus it was: the word thus translated is unintelligible as it stands. Cf. note on verse 16.

20. Idolatry was not the worst; children were sacrificed. References to this horrible rite are not infrequent: see 2 Kings xvi. 3, xvii. 17, xxi. 6: also for the prophetic attitude, Mic. vi. 7; Jer. vii. 31, xix. 5; Isa. lvii. 5; from which it is plain that children were thus offered to Yahweh; see also Deut. xviii. 10; Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 2–5. From the account in 2 Kings iii. 27, the Israelites regarded it as of immense influence; and its existence in much earlier times is implied by Gen. xxii. It would seem to have become common in Judah only at the time of Ahaz. See also on xx. 25.

21. my children: a note of humanity, for which we may compare Jonah iv. 11. Evidently, however, from this verse, these sacrifices, like others, were killed before the fire touched them.

22. The insertion of such an appeal at this point is surely a touch of genius. But it is to Israel's helplessness, not to her early piety (like Hosea and Jeremiah) that Ezekiel appeals.

23. The parenthesis is omitted in the LXX; a copyist, however, would hardly have thought of inserting it.

uilt unto thee an eminent place, and hast made thee
lofty place in every street. Thou hast built thy 25
ofty place at every head of the way, and hast made
hy beauty an abomination, and hast opened thy feet to
very one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredom.
hou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians, 26
hy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast multiplied thy
horedom, to provoke me to anger. Behold therefore, 27
have stretched out my hand over thee, and have
iminished thine ordinary *food*, and delivered thee unto the
ill of them that hate thee, the daughters of the Philistines,

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24. eminent place: more probable than the translation of the nargin ('vault, chamber'). The idols have prominent positions nade for them, like the statues in Athens (where, it was said, here lived more gods than men) or the images of the Madonna in talian cities. See note on xliii. 13.

25. head of the way: the street corner, where all would pass nd could pause to worship. The expression in xxi. 21 is different.

26. fornication. Ezekiel now turns to Judah's foreign alliances; he sin, however, is the same; for a political was also a religious inion, as is shown by the histories of Solomon and Ahab. In he 'Assumption of Moses,' v. 3, the Maccabaean treaty with Rome s stigmatized as 'fornication.'

with the Egyptians. When was this? The mention of the Philistines in verse 27 would suggest the early years in Canaan. Egypt, whose suzerainty over Palestine had been decaying in the fourteenth century (as shown by the Tel-el-Amarna letters), may have tried to regain her influence by winning over the Hebrew conquerors. There is no hint of this in Judges; Egypt remained weak politically till the eleventh century, and Ezekiel probably refers to Solomon's alliance with Egypt; but cf. 2 Chr. xxviii. 18.

great of flesh: a significant reference to Israel's sensuality. The Egyptians on their own monuments are always slender, while the Assyrians represented themselves as muscular and stout.

27. thine ordinary food, or 'allowance' (as marg.): cf. verse 19. Famine is uniformly represented by Ezekiel, and also by Amos (iv. 6), as a divine judgement.

daughters of the Philistines: cf. 2 Sam. i. 20. 'Daughters,' in the regular Hebrew idiom, means 'allied or dependent townships.' The fact that the city of Jerusalem was not in the hands of Israel before David's time shows that Ezekiel is thinking of the whole nation. The sarcasm is as biting as in verses 47, 51.

28 which are ashamed of thy lewd way. Thou hast played
the harlot also with the Assyrians, because thou was
unsatiable; yea, thou hast played the harlot with them,
29 and yet thou wast not satisfied. Thou hast moreover
multiplied thy whoredom in the land of Canaan, unto
30 Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith. How
weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, seeing thou
doest all these things, the work of an imperious whorish
31 woman; in that thou buildest thine eminent place in the
head of every way, and makest thy lofty place in every
street; and hast not been as an harlot, in that thou
32 scornest hire. A wife that committeth adultery! that
33 taketh strangers instead of her husband! They give
gifts to all harlots: but thou givest thy gifts to all thy
lovers, and bribest them, that they may come unto thee
34 on every side for thy whoredoms. And the contrary is

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29. Canaan: the word 'Canaanite' was also a general term for a merchant. Hence the R. V. marg. 'land of traffic' is to be preferred. Cf. xvii. 4.

30. The grammatical form used here for 'thy heart' might easily be rendered, as by the LXX, 'thy daughter.' Probably the text is faulty.

imperious, because scorning a prostitute's hire (verse 31), or because, like a princess, she could fulfil all her desires without any one to hinder her.

31. Partly repeated from verse 24.

32. Ezekiel pauses to give the full effect to his allegorical representation of Judah's sin, which has been not simply adultery, but shameless prostitution as well, and even worse than that (verse 33). The double sin is equally clear in Hos. ii. The fact that this verse occurs in a different form in the LXX has suggested to Smend and others that it is a gloss; this is by no means certain.

33. They, indefinite: 'people.'

thy gifts: the tribute paid to Assyria, or Babylon, out of the wealth which Yahweh had given to Judah (cf. 2 Kings xvi. 8, where Ahaz surrenders the temple treasures). The word used here is closely similar to the Babylonian word for dowry; the woman gives even this to her lovers (cf. verses 17 and 18).

n thee from *other* women in thy whoredoms, in that none followeth thee to commit whoredom: and whereas thou givest hire, and no hire is given unto thee, therefore thou art contrary.

Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD: Thus 35, 36
saith the Lord GOD, Because thy filthiness was poured out, and thy nakedness discovered through thy whoredoms with thy lovers; and because of all the idols of thy abominations, and for the blood of thy children, which
thou didst give unto them; therefore behold, I will 37
gather all thy lovers, with whom thou hast taken pleasure, and all them that thou hast loved, with all them that thou hast hated; I will even gather them against thee on every side, and will discover thy nakedness unto them, that
they may see all thy nakedness. And I will judge thee, as 38

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34. none followeth thee: a piece of still bitterer invective, which, by the repetition in the last clause, Ezekiel desires to make specially emphatic.

xvi. 35-43. As the sins of Jerusalem sprang directly from misuse of her blessings, her punishment shall be the direct result of her sins; her 'pleasant vices' shall be made the very instruments to plague her. The historical analogue is exact; it was Judah's coquetting with Assyria which brought the Assyrian legions into her own territories. Cf. 2 Kings xvi. 7 and Isa. vii. 1, 2, 17.

35. All the scorn of the previous section is gathered up into the insulting appellative.

36. filthiness: literally, as the margin points out, 'brass.' If so, why should not silver or gold have been mentioned? The Hebrews had no copper money. From verse 15, and xxiii. 8, and Babylonian analogies, the word probably means here 'licentiousness.'

37. that thou hast hated: either Philistines and Edomites, with whom no alliances had been made, or, as the expression implies, the lovers of whom Judah had become weary and had grown to loathe; the word has this meaning in Prov. v. 12.

38. Literally, 'and I will make thee blood of my fury,' &c.; a very harsh phrase, but not impossible here. All the old tenderness has now gone.

women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and
39 I will bring upon thee the blood of fury and jealousy. I will
also give thee into their hand, and they shall throw down
thine eminent place, and break down thy lofty places;
and they shall strip thee of thy clothes, and take thy fair
40 jewels: and they shall leave thee naked and bare. They
shall also bring up an assembly against thee, and they
shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through with
41 their swords. And they shall burn thine houses with
fire, and execute judgements upon thee in the sight of
many women; and I will cause thee to cease from playing
the harlot, and thou shalt also give no hire any more.
42 So will I satisfy my fury upon thee, and my jealousy
shall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be
43 no more angry. Because thou hast not remembered the
days of thy youth, but hast fretted me in all these things;
therefore behold, I also will bring thy way upon thine
head, saith the Lord God: and thou shalt not commit
this lewdness above all thine abominations.

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40. assembly: a solemn gathering to execute judgement.

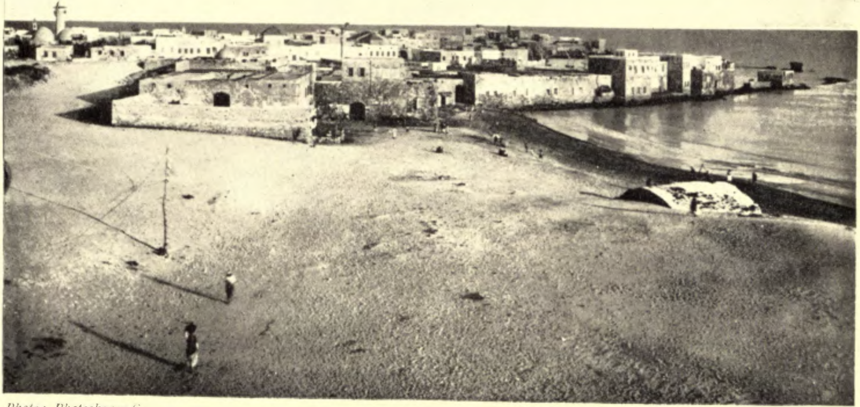
stone thee. Cf. xxiii. 45, Lev. xx. 10, and John viii. 5 on the punishment of the adulteress.

thrust through: the word does not occur elsewhere; it would seem to refer to the punishment of oath-breaking, which was (in the curse regularly invoked by those who made the covenant) to be cut asunder like the victim by whose sacrifice the oath was ratified. The allegory is thus still maintained; though the line between allegory and literal prediction is growing uncertain.

42. Any judgement as to the seeming harshness of this 'anthropopathism,' whereby Yahweh is represented as 'raging himself out,' should be modified by recollecting that we are not yet free of the allegory. The expression itself implies restoration and returning favour (cf. verse 60); but it is surely precarious to omit the words, for this reason, with Cornill and Siegfried.

43. thy youth, and the love I then showered on thee, and the covenant I made with thee (cf. verse 60).

(this) lewdness. 'This' is not in the Hebrew, and the



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TYRE

Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use *this* 44
proverb against thee, saying, As is the mother, so is
her daughter. Thou art thy mother's daughter, that 45
loatheth her husband and her children; and thou art
the sister of thy sisters, which loathed their husbands
and their children: your mother was an Hittite, and
your father an Amorite. And thine elder sister is Samaria, 46
that dwelleth at thy left hand, she and her daughters:
and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand,
is Sodom and her daughters. Yet hast thou not walked 47
in their ways, nor done after their abominations; but,
as *if that were* a very little *thing*, thou wast more corrupt
than they in all thy ways. As I live, saith the Lord 48
GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her
daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters.

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sense is perfect and not future, nor can we suppose that Judah's past sins do not merit this name. A slight alteration, suggested by Kraetzschmar, would give, 'Oh, that thou hadst not committed lewdness!' but in any case the distinction between 'lewdness' and the other 'abominations' is obscure (cf. verse 58). Does Ezekiel wish that the sin of Judah had at least been free from this stain of sensual faithlessness?

xvi. 44-58. Further emphasis on the iniquity of Judah, which is greater than that of either Sodom or Samaria; Judah will find that she is placed on a level with those despised sinners.

44. the mother: the Hittite of verse 3; a further sarcasm.

45. her husband: this can refer neither to the Amorite nor to Yahweh (Theodoret), as if he were the real husband even of the heathen (cf. 'their husbands'), but to the general wickedness of heathenism in which Judah is only 'taking after' her despised family.

46. elder, because of greater size and historical importance.

left, i. e. north; the beholder is understood to face the east.

daughters. See note on verse 27.

47. a very little: the Hebrew word for 'as if it were a little' is followed in the text by an unknown word, which has been doubtfully explained either as a part of the word for 'small' or connected with a supposed Assyrian word for 'little.' Hence the 'very little' of the Revisers. Bertholet suggests 'only a little

49 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, fulness of bread, and prosperous ease was in her and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of
50 the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took
51 them away as I saw *good.* Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they, and hast justified thy sisters by all thine abominations which thou hast done.
52 Thou also, bear thine own shame, in that thou hast given judgement for thy sisters; through thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they, they are more righteous than thou: yea, be thou also confounded, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters.
53 And I will turn again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, and the captivity of thy captives in

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time, and thou hast done.' 'Little' might be temporal, but Ezekiel allows no 'morning cloud goodness' (Hos. vi. 4).

49. There is no reference here to the specific sin of Sodom, as related in Gen. xix; but Sodom's guilt was older, and rested on the pride and fullness here mentioned (Gen. xiii. 10, xviii. 20: cf. Matt. x. 15; Rev. xi. 8).

51. justified: i. e. thou hast made them appear guiltless, in comparison with the enormity of thy sins; so verse 52.

52. given judgement: in 1 Sam. ii. 25 the word is translated 'to entreat for.' The meaning is that Judah, standing before the judgement seat weighed down with her own load of guilt, makes the sentence upon Sodom and Samaria comparatively a light one.

53. Samaria and Sodom are to be restored with Judah. The promise of restoration is given in verse 60 as if it were the first; but such a restoration as is here (verse 53) foretold would be to the Jews no true establishment of Yahweh's covenant, but only an aggravation of their misery. Ezekiel's words imply the existence already of the exclusiveness and national pride which was so marked a feature of later Judaism (cf. Juvenal, xiv. 103, 'Non monstrare vias, eadem nisi sacra colenti'). Israel's restoration is foretold also in xxxvii. 15, xlviii. 1 ff. In xlvii. 9 the Dead Sea is to be cleansed, but nothing is elsewhere hinted of a resurrection of

the midst of them: that thou mayest bear thine own 54
shame, and mayest be ashamed because of all that thou
hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them. And 55
thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to
their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall
return to their former estate, and thou and thy daughters
shall return to your former estate. For thy sister Sodom 56
was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride;
before thy wickedness was discovered, as at the time of 57
the reproach of the daughters of Syria, and of all that
are round about her, the daughters of the Philistines,
which do despite unto thee round about. Thou hast 58
borne thy lewdness and thine abominations, saith the
LORD. For thus saith the Lord GOD: I will even deal 59
with thee as thou hast done, which hast despised the
oath in breaking the covenant. Nevertheless I will 60

Sodom; nor of the restoration of an independent Northern Kingdom (verse 55).

54. comfort: cf. note on xiv. 23.

55. Ezekiel here implies the destruction of Jerusalem, so often explicitly foretold to his hearers.

56. Why should Sodom have been mentioned by Judah, if she had long since fallen? Kraetzschmar and others prefer the interrogative form, 'Was not Sodom a by-word in thy mouth?'

57. The first clause should read 'before thy shame (or nakedness) was uncovered.'

Syria (Aram) should surely be Edom; the alteration from the one Hebrew name to the other would be exceedingly small. The 'reproach' is the spiteful exultation of her neighbours over the calamities of Judah: see notes on xxv. 12 and xxxv. 5.

58. borne: i. e. borne the shame and guilt of thy sins; 'you have been no longer able to conceal them or put them from you': cf. verse 54.

xvi. 59-62. When Judah's sin is requited she shall be restored to her former relations with Yahweh. When she recognizes the level to which her sin has sunk her, her shame will keep her from a repetition of her sin.

59. Yahweh himself must act according to the law of retaliation.

60. I will remember. The pronoun is here emphatic; since

remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy
youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting
61 covenant. Then shalt thou remember thy ways, and be
ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder
sisters and thy younger: and I will give them unto thee
62 for daughters, but not by thy covenant. And I will
establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know
63 that I am the LORD: that thou mayest remember, and
be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more,
because of thy shame; when I have forgiven thee all
that thou hast done, saith the Lord GOD.

Judah will not turn, Yahweh must shame her through goodness. This is the first clear covenant passage in Ezekiel: cf. Jer. xxxii. 40 and l. 5, and Ezek. xxxvii. 26.

61. be ashamed. Any joy at restoration is neutralized by shame, especially at the thought that Sodom shares the new mercy. Cf. xii. 16. Ezekiel is here describing the lower shame, that blushes to find itself numbered with despised transgressors, rather than the higher shame, which recognizes the pollution of sin itself.

sisters: the grammatical forms imply that other cities besides Sodom and Samaria will be joined to Judah, though they will now be in a subordinate relation, as 'daughters.'

not by thy covenant: the whole restoration flows from Yahweh's free act of grace; Judah has no claim. So St. Paul (Rom. ii. 3) warns the self-righteous Jew not to think that the continued goodness of God is a sign of his own righteousness instead of an inducement to repentance.

62. that I am the LORD. The familiar phrase occurs in a new context; but both in punishment and in restoration Yahweh is revealing his true character.

63. when I have forgiven thee. The first mention of forgiveness in the book. The order in Ezekiel's mind is, first, the bringing home of sin to the sinner's mind and conscience by punishment; then, forgiveness; and lastly, after the exhibition of God's grace and mercy, shame and self-loathing. Cf. xxxvi. 31, 32. The whole prophecy of future mercy here is curt, as if Ezekiel, like Jonah, almost grudged it. Perhaps we ought to wonder that it exists at all after such an indictment. In the second half of the book the promises are richer: cf. xxxvi. 24-30, 33-38, xxxvii. 21-28. But the prophet is far from contemplating

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son **17** 2
of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the
house of Israel; and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: 3
A great eagle with great wings and long pinions, full of

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that exuberance which could make the exiles 'break forth into joy.' The Jews had to wait for the end of the exile before, in Ezekiel's successor, God 'commended' to them His salvation and His love.

xvii. *The Parable of the Two Eagles, the Cedar and the Vine.* After the comprehensive attack on the whole spirit of Judah since she began to be a nation, Ezekiel now reviews the actual sins of the present. Perhaps he has already been met by the objection which he quotes at the beginning of the next chapter. In any case, his thoughts turn from the fathers to the children; and he now makes use of the familiar idea of Israel as the vine to describe the actual treachery of Zedekiah. Smend urges that at this time, between the sixth and seventh years of Zedekiah's reign, he was not yet in rebellion; Nebuchadnezzar's expedition against Jerusalem did not take place till Zedekiah's ninth year; but Jeremiah (xxvii) makes it plain that treacherous plans, such as are referred to in verse 15, must have been in hand for some time previously. Had the chapter been a case of 'prediction after the event,' verse 20 would presumably have been less vague.

xvii. 1–10. A great eagle carries off a cedar-twig into a land of merchants, and plants a vine on fertile and well-watered soil; it turns, however, not to him but to another eagle; naturally the first eagle will pluck it up by the roots and leave it to wither.

2. a riddle, as distinct from a 'proverb' in xvi. 44, or xviii. 2. The riddle is properly a description or story in which the relation between the persons or things described corresponds to the relation between persons or things familiar to the speaker and hearer. It is distinguished from an allegory by the attempt to disguise from the hearers what, when they learn the answer, will seem ridiculously obvious. Cf. Samson's riddle (Judges xiv. 14); in this form riddles are found in the most primitive as well as the most advanced societies. Here, by the addition of literary amplifications, the riddle practically becomes an allegory; though doubtless the prophet desired, at least at first, to puzzle his audience and keep them in suspense. The same element of suspense is prominent in Nathan's parable, 2 Sam. xii. 1–12, &c., and it is not absent in the parables of the Gospels.

3. The eagle, as the type of the conquering plunderer, is found in Hos. viii. 1; Deut. xxviii. 49; Jer. xlviii. 40; Isa. xlvi. 11, &c.

feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon,
4 and took the top of the cedar: he cropped off the topmost of the young twigs thereof, and carried it into
5 a land of traffic; he set it in a city of merchants. He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful soil; he placed it beside many waters; he set it
6 as a willow tree. And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him, and the roots thereof were under him: so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.
7 There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers: and, behold, this vine did bend its roots toward him, and shot forth its branches toward him, from the beds of its plantation, that he might water it.

The cedar here may have been suggested by the cedar palace of the kings of Judah; cedars naturally suggest Lebanon.

4. the topmost of the young twigs: Jehoiachin. The land of traffic is Babylon, as in xvi. 29; traffic as yet was foreign to the Israelite genius.

5. the land is here Judah itself, the 'seed' being Zedekiah.

he placed. The letters which are represented by this word do not form any known Hebrew word: cf. note on xvi. 47. Possibly they are a repetition of part of the word translated 'he took' at the beginning of the verse.

willow. A willow cannot turn into a vine; but possibly the mention of 'many waters'—a necessity in Palestine for anything like luxuriant growth—suggests the tree which specially needs water. The word, however, does not occur elsewhere, and may simply denote a succulent plant.

6. of low stature. Nebuchadnezzar's policy was naturally to keep Judah weak and dependent on Babylon (verse 14); it was equally natural that Judah should try to escape from such a position. Ezekiel's complaint is that this was done after an oath of allegiance had been given.

The second eagle, as representing Pharaoh, is more briefly described than the first.

7. beds: probably trellises or terraces. Since the soil is so well watered (verses 5, 8,), the wish of the vine for more water is plainly superfluous.

It was planted in a good soil by many waters, that it 8
might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit,
that it might be a goodly vine. Say thou, Thus saith 9
the Lord God: Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up
the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it
may wither; that all its fresh springing leaves may
wither; even without great power or much people to
pluck it up by the roots thereof? Yea, behold, being 10
planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither, when
the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the beds
where it grew.

Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 11
Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these 12
things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon came
to Jerusalem, and took the king thereof, and the princes
thereof, and brought them to him to Babylon; and he 13
took of the seed royal, and made a covenant with him; he
also brought him under an oath, and took away the mighty
of the land: that the kingdom might be base, that it 14
might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his covenant
it might stand. But he rebelled against him in sending 15
his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him

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9. Nebuchadnezzar will not need a large army to accomplish his first vengeance on so disloyal a dependant. Note that here the 'riddle' is dropped for the moment.

10. east wind: cf. Gen. xli. 6; Ezek. xix. 12. Nebuchadnezzar is also the great Eastern power. The figure of the east wind describes the ruin referred to as 'plucking up' in verse 9.

xvii. 11–21. The interpretation might hardly be considered necessary, except that two fresh elements are added, the fact that an oath was broken, and that the oath was really to Yahweh, and not simply to the Babylonian monarch (verses 13, 18, 19).

12. See 2 Kings xxiv. 10–16. For Ezekiel's view of Nebuchadnezzar, see Introd. p. 16.

horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he
escape that doeth such things? shall he break the covenant,
16 and yet escape? As I live, saith the Lord God, surely in the
place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose
oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with
17 him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. Neither shall
Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company make
for him in the war, when they cast up mounts and build
18 forts, to cut off many persons. For he hath despised the
oath by breaking the covenant; and behold, he had given
his hand, and yet hath done all these things; he shall
19 not escape. Therefore thus saith the Lord God: As I live,
surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant
that he hath broken, I will even bring it upon his own
20 head. And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall

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15. horses: cf. 1 Kings x. 28; 2 Kings xviii. 23. To the Israelites, who were properly mountaineers, horses were always strange (cf. Amos vi. 12), and even terrible (Job xxxix. 19–25).

16. in the midst of Babylon: i.e. in a defiled land. Ezekiel himself, however, nowhere expresses any consciousness of being condemned to pollution as living in exile.

17. Pharaoh: Hophra, who reigned from 588 to 570 B.C. See Jer. xxxvii. 5–8; cf. also Lam. iv. 17. Kraetzschmar argues that 'Pharaoh' should be omitted, and that the sense is 'neither shall he (the 'king' mentioned in verse 16) deal with him with a great army.' This secures the parallel with verse 9; 'his' is not in the Hebrew text; and the insertion of Pharaoh may well be due to a copyist who, unlike Ezekiel, had the events of the siege in his memory.

18. For this oath-breaking, cf. Deut. xxix. 25, and an inscription of Assurbanipal, which makes the Arabians ask, 'Why have we suffered this disaster?' the answer being, 'Because we broke the oath we made to Assurbanipal and sinned against his forgiveness.'

19. mine oath. Even to an alien oaths must be kept; i.e. not only Israelites but foreigners are here recognized as being members of a moral society, a sin within which is a sin against Yahweh: cf. Ps. li. 4.

20, 21. A characteristic amplification of punishment; the riddle is here left behind. For the 'remnant,' see note on xii. 16.

be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me. And all his fugitives in all his 21 bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward every wind: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: I will also take of the lofty 22 top of the cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the topmost of his young twigs a tender one, and I will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain 23 of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees 24

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xvii. 22–24. *The future growth of the cedar.* Yahweh will himself plant a cedar-twig, which is to grow into a great cedar-tree; and all the trees will learn Yahweh's power to fling down and to exalt.

This passage gives us the first prediction of an ungrudging restoration, through the medium of a Messiah; as is Ezekiel's wont, he expresses his thought more fully later on (xxi. 32, xxxiv. 24, xxxvii. 24). With two exceptions (this passage and xxi. 32), these predictions occur in the second half of the book (xxxiv. 24, xxxvii. 24, and, in general, xl–xlviii). Here, the language implies that Ezekiel expects the future monarch to be taken from the Davidic house (verse 22); perhaps he is influenced by the prophetic expectations of Isaiah and Jeremiah; elsewhere he shrinks from a mere restoration of the old monarchy, or even from a monarchy at all (see notes on passages referred to). Stade, less probably, thinks that this passage refers to a non-Davidic monarchy.

22. Cf. verses 3 and 4. The high mountain (Jerusalem) is in strong contrast to verse 5.

23. fruit should probably be read as 'foliage.'

fowl: since 'the trees' in verse 24 must represent heathen nations, who are, as elsewhere, to behold the might and justice of Yahweh, the birds dwelling in the cedar's branches must be the subjects of the new monarchy, the 'strangers within the gates.'

of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought dow the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up th green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish ; I th LORD have spoken and have done it.

18 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying

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xviii. After considering Zedekiah's individual responsibilit for the fate which was to crush him, Ezekiel turns to a wide consideration of the question by which perhaps chap. xvii ha been suggested to him, and which he now quotes (verse 2) After all, the calamity was falling on the whole nation ; sinful a Judah had been before, she had remained a nation till now ; wh had she not been destroyed when Manasseh was filling the lan with idolatry ? Did not the exiles themselves belong to th generation which had carried through the reform of 621 B. C. Obviously, to the exiles, the old Hebrew view had grown unsatisfactory. That view held that the moral personality which is th subject of reward and blame is not the individual, but the famil or the race (Gen. vii. 1 ; Josh. vii. 24 ; 2 Sam. xxi ; Ps. cix. 14 Matt. xxvii. 25 ; also Exod. xx. 5, and xxxiv. 6-8). This is implie in the justice or the customs of nearly all early societies, and as such is consecrated by religion and attributed to the will of God but it is certain, sooner or later, to be recognized as involving the suffering of the innocent for the guilty. 'How is our suffering for the nation's past sins,' asked the exiles, 'to be reconciled with the justice of God ?'

This drives Ezekiel back to the question of responsibility already discussed in chaps. iii and xiv ; but he approaches it now from a different side—not from the point of view of the preacher who warns or the listener who is warned, but from that of the righteous and the sinner in general ; he thus constructs a kind of 'catechism' of death and life. He lays down the principle boldly that there is no such thing as suffering for another's sins ; Yahweh can do what he likes with his own ; those who have not sinned he preserves alive ; but this makes no difference to their children ; each stands or falls to himself. In the face of this, how can Yahweh's justice be impugned ? True repentance is always followed by reinstatement in Yahweh's grace ; hence, the practical outcome is the necessity of moral reform. Cease to argue about God's justice ; amend your ways, that you may receive His favour.

Five points should be here briefly noticed. (1) Ezekiel makes a distinct advance on Jeremiah, who seems (xxxi. 30 ; cf. Lam. v. 7) to accept the proverb for the present time. (2) Ezekiel's

hat mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the 2
nd of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
nd the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith 3
e Lord GOD, ye shall not have *occasion* any more to use
is proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the 4

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eory has all the one-sidedness of youth; the prophet is thinking ut his way. Did he really hold that death always followed on n, never on goodness? He hardly feels as a problem what Job nd many of the Psalmists wrestle with in vain (cf. Pss. xxxvii, ix, lxxiii); we cannot but wonder whether, had he been faced y the sufferings of Job, he would have held to this view as naciously as did Eliphaz and his friends. (3) Elsewhere, in onnexion both with Israel and with the nations, the view of e nation as the moral personality is maintained (cf. xx. 4, xxi.); indeed, outside chaps. iii, xiv, xviii, and xxxiii, he seems to e almost uninfluenced by these newer speculations, and in chaps. -xlviii he shows no trace of them. (4) Here at last he shrinks om the thought of Yahweh as an impartial judge dealing out ith even hand pain and reward. He has no pleasure in the eath of the sinner, even when his sins have been such as to ouse our hate or contempt or loathing. 'Let him turn and live.' 5) Hence, Yahweh becomes a moral personality, instead of simply mighty being, and thus infinitely superior to the gods of the eathen, at the very moment when his realm in Palestine is being estroyed; on this foundation alone can monotheism be securely ounded, for it is the offspring, not of philosophy, but of the evelopment of religious experience. See Introd., pp. 20, 21. The apter is written with Ezekiel's characteristic fullness of exression; and many clauses are omitted in the LXX.

xviii. 1-4. *The text of the discourse:* the supremacy of Yahweh er every individual life.

2. this proverb: cf. note on xi. 3. Unripe grapes are often ten in Syria, and the bad effect on the teeth follows very pidly; all the more irrational is the delay of which the exiles omplain.

4. all souls: Ezekiel thus in a breath denies the communal eory of morals; the father is neither more nor less important in od's sight than the son. Yahweh is hampered by no convenons or rules from dealing out death as he chooses—and he ooses to deal it out to the actual sinner; the emphasis in the st clause is to be laid on *it*, as the Hebrew makes clear. bviously, the prophet is not here thinking of natural death; but nce, in the O.T., death means the descent into Sheol, where

soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine : th
5 soul that sinneth, it shall die. But if a man be just, an
6 do that which is lawful and right, and hath not eaten upo
the mountains, neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idol
of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour'
wife, neither hath come near to a woman in her separation
7 and hath not wronged any, but hath restored to the debto
his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given hi
bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with
8 garment ; he that hath not given forth upon usury, neithe

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there is no communion with God, and since, in a period lik Ezekiel's, death is so often associated with violence and miser it comes naturally to be used for the loss of all that is wort having. The verse thus asserts two far-reaching propositions the absolute supremacy of Yahweh, and the principle by whic Yahweh exerts that supremacy. Cf. Job xxi. 19.

xviii. 5-8. *The conditions on which life is preserved.*

For this list of good and evil acts, cf. Ps. xv and Job xxxi The list is made up almost entirely, like the decalogue, of prohibi tions; it begins, like the decalogue, with purity of worship advances to sexual purity, or those aspects of it which wer most important to a Hebrew, and then to that spirit of humanit and kindliness for which the Hebrew codes are conspicuous Kleinert (*Die Profeten in ihrer socialen Beziehung*) sees here, an in xxii. 7-12, the foundations of a new social order based o family life (itself the true source of religious observance) and civi rectitude ; but Ezekiel's moral code is essentially conservative.

6. mountains. To eat on the mountains was at the least t join in the debased worship of Yahweh, which was no better tha idolatry : see notes on vi. 2 ; cf. xxii. 7-12.

defiled : cf. Exod. xx. 14.

come near : cf. Lev. xviii. 10, xx. 18 ; not mentioned in th earliest legislation or in Deuteronomy.

7. For the restoration of the debtor's pledge, see Exod. xxii 25 ; Deut. xxiv. 13 ; Lev. xix. 33, xxv. 14, 17 ; and Ezek. xxii 7, 29, xlv. 8, xlvi. 18.

8. usury, interest: cf. Exod. xxii. 24 ; Deut. xxiii. 20 ; Lev. xxv 26. Deuteronomy allows interest to be taken from a stranger The code of Hammurabi assumes the giving and taking of interes in ordinary commercial transactions ; such interest was abou twenty per cent. in the second Babylonian Empire. The Hebrew

ath taken any increase, that hath withdrawn his hand
rom iniquity, hath executed true judgement between man
nd man, hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my 9
ıdgements, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live,
aith the Lord GOD. If he beget a son that is a robber, 10
shedder of blood, and that doeth any one of these things,
nd that doeth not any of those *duties*, but even hath eaten 11
pon the mountains, and defiled his neighbour's wife, hath 12
ronged the poor and needy, hath spoiled by violence,
ath not restored the pledge, and hath lifted up his eyes
the idols, hath committed abomination, hath given 13
rth upon usury, and hath taken increase: shall he
ıen live? he shall not live: he hath done all these
bominations: he shall surely die; his blood shall be
pon him. Now, lo, if he beget a son, that seeth all his 14
ıther's sins, which he hath done, and feareth, and doeth

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ere not a commercial people (see note on xvi. 29), and the
lebrew legislators, like the framers of the Mediaeval Canon Law
f. Ashley, *Economic History*, Bk. I. iii), were chiefly thinking of
ıe advantages taken by the rich of the poor in their need, when
ıterest becomes usury. Since Hebrews are brothers, nothing
ıore than the money loaned must be asked for; 'increase' must
ot be 'taken.'

xviii. 10–13. *The corresponding conditions from which death will
esult.* The formal nature of the discourse is evident from the
epetition of the sins as if they were all committed by the sinner.

10. any one of these things: the margin, 'that doeth to a
rother any of these,' is the correct translation of the Hebrew text
s it stands; the addition of a single letter would give that of
ıe R. V. text. Toy and Kraetzschmar would omit the clause as a
oublet of the first clause in verse 11, but in the formal style of
ıis chapter it presents no great difficulty, if corrected.

xviii. 14–20. *The son does not die for his father's iniquity; the
ather dies for his own.* No new thought is here added; but
zekiel feels it necessary to leave no loophole for ambiguity in his
tatement.

14. As Hezekiah had seen Ahaz's sins and Josiah Amon's and
lanasseh's.

15 not such like, that hath not eaten upon the mountain
neither hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house
16 Israel, hath not defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hat
wronged any, hath not taken aught to pledge, neither hat
spoiled by violence, but hath given his bread to th
17 hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment, th
hath withdrawn his hand from the poor, that hath n
received usury nor increase, hath executed my judgement
hath walked in my statutes; he shall not die for th
18 iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. As for hi
father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother b
violence, and did that which is not good among his peopl
19 behold, he shall die in his iniquity. Yet say ye, Wher
fore doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father
When the son hath done that which is lawful and righ
and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, h
20 shall surely live. The soul that sinneth, it shall die
the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neithe
shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; th
righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and th
21 wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if th

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18. his brother. The word is as little apposite here as in vers 10. It is omitted, as also in verse 10, by LXX. 'One migh almost suspect that it is used as a sign of abbreviation like ou "&c."' (Kraetzschmar).

19. Ezekiel here quotes the expression of the older view whic he has been combating throughout the discourse. There wer those who were surprised that the children's teeth were no set on edge. Their question is answered by a repetition of th principle—'it is only the sinners who die.'

20. bear the iniquity: cf. iv. 4, xiv. 10.

xviii. 21-29. The consequence of change from evil conduct t good or good conduct to evil. This marks a further step; as th parent cannot influence the fate of the child, so one part of life can not influence another.

wicked turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his 22 transgressions that he hath committed shall be remembered against him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure in the death of the 23 wicked? saith the Lord GOD: and not rather that he should return from his way, and live? But when the 24 righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? None of his righteous deeds that he hath done shall be remembered: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and n his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. Yet 25 ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel: Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? When the righteous man turneth away from his 26 ighteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth therein; n his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, 27 when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness hat he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and

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23. Ezekiel's exposition has already led him to the possibility f conversion; now, as in verse 32 and xxxiii. 11, he reaches the evel of the N. T.; yet, as in Job xvii. 25, we have here but a limpse, which exerts little or no influence on the rest of the uthor's thought. In verse 24 Ezekiel is positive that if the sins f the wicked may be forgotten, so may be the good deeds of the ighteous.

25. Ezekiel here quotes a second complaint; 'then God is in-onstant.' Many passages in the O. T. might seem to bear out his inconstancy: e. g. Gen. vi. 7; Exod. xxii. 12, 14; Amos vii. 3; oel ii. 13. But Ezekiel repudiates the suggestion as vigorously as oes Samuel (1 Sam. xv. 29); it is not Yahweh that changes, but ian. For this 'dialogue' between prophet and hearers, cf. Ial. i. 2, 7, &c.

26, 27: the two cases already referred to, in inverted order.

28 right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth,
and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath
29 committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die. Yet
saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not
equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are
30 not your ways unequal? Therefore I will judge you, O
house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the
Lord God. Return ye, and turn yourselves from all your
31 transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast
away from you all your transgressions, wherein ye have
transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit:
32 for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no
pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord
God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live.

19 Moreover, take thou up a lamentation for the princes

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in xxxiii. 13-20 the style is at once more epigrammatic and more regular, as if it were the outworking of what in this chapter is a sketch.

27. he shall save: the pronoun is emphatic: 'he and not I.'

xviii. 30-32. *The practical conclusion.*

30. Probably the margin should be read in the last clause; 'so shall they not be a stumblingblock of iniquity unto you.' The expression is then identical with that which occurs in vii. 19, xiv. 3.

31. Elsewhere, God gives men a new heart: xi. 19, xxxvi. 26: cf. Jer. iv. 3, xxiv. 7, xxxi. 33, and Phil. ii. 12. Here Ezekiel says no more than Isaiah (i. 17).

32. It is obvious that Ezekiel here passes by several considerations which would rise to our minds. He neglects the influences of heredity and environment, and of character. Children do suffer from their parents; a man's past does condition his present. The problem is not for us so simple as for Ezekiel. But it must be remembered, first, that Ezekiel is opposing a definite error, and second, that he does not actually deny such influences; his argument is simply, 'Where good is done, it cannot receive the punishment of evil'; and this is true. The statement that God may perform with reluctance a necessary judicial act shows the real audacity of Ezekiel's thought.

xix. *An Elegy over the Princes and over Judah.* This chapter forms a natural conclusion to the whole section (xii-xix). Nothing could of Israel, and say, What was thy mother? A lioness: she 2

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better illustrate the versatility of Ezekiel's style and thought than the sequence of the four chapters xvi–xix; fierce invective, picturesque and vigorously-worked-out simile, scholastic disquisition, and passionate lyric. If xviii reminds the reader of the Talmud, xix reminds him of the finest poetry in the Psalms. There is here no suggestion of the theology either of xviii or of xvi; for once the exiled Jew allows himself to express that grief over the fall of Zion, in spite of all her guilt, which is heard so poignantly in the outbursts of Jeremiah.

The chapter is written very carefully in poetic form; each verse has two limbs, and each limb two sections, the first of which has three accents, and the second two; the second limb is generally left unlinked to the first by any conjunction. This metrical scheme is known as the *Qinah* or 'elegy,' and the fact that accents and not syllables are numbered gives it the effect of English or German rather than of French or Greek poetry. The mournful cadence can easily be detected. Various suggestions as to the existence of rhyme or of metrical feet (numbered syllables) in Hebrew poetry have been made, but are at best doubtful, and demand a suspiciously large amount of textual alteration; see also C. A. and E. Briggs, *Psalms*, vol. i, pp. xxxviii–xlviii. In this chapter there are several omissions in the LXX which, if made in the Hebrew text, would make the Qinah metre more regular. Apart from this, the text is at best in disorder in many places.

xix. 1–9. *The elegy over the two princes, Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin.*

1. It is noteworthy that the prophet attributes this dirge equally with the 'riddle' of xvii, and the sermon of xviii, to the inspiration of Yahweh.

princes: LXX reads 'prince' (referring to Zedekiah), which would seem to be borne out by verse 2, 'thy mother.' Since more than one is referred to in the chapter, the singular might easily have been changed to the plural; Ezekiel never uses the word 'king' of the monarchs of Judah (see note on vii. 27 and xii. 10). The same word is also used by Hosea, but not regularly. Jeremiah has no scruples about using the more usual 'king.' Ezekiel's shrinking is best explained by the feeling that monarchy had been a violation of the theocracy: cf. 1 Sam. viii. 10–17.

2. The rhythm necessitates the removal of the pause between 'mother' and a 'lioness,' and we should then translate, 'How was thy mother a lioness!' but this is hardly English, or Hebrew either. Toy suggests 'was like'; the verse would then read,

Thy mother was like a lioness, Among lions:
She couched amid the young lions, She reared her whelps.

thy mother. This would naturally refer to Judah. Kraetz-

couched among lions, in the midst of the young lions she
3 nourished her whelps. And she brought up one of her
whelps; he became a young lion: and he learned to
4 catch the prey, he devoured men. The nations also
heard of him; he was taken in their pit: and they brought
5 him with hooks unto the land of Egypt. Now when she
saw that she had waited, and her hope was lost, then she
took another of her whelps, and made him a young lion.
6 And he went up and down among the lions, he became
a young lion: and he learned to catch the prey, he

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schmar, however, suggests that the queen-mother, Hamutal, wife of Josiah, must be meant, since (1) the queen-mother was a person of great importance in the state (cf. Jer. xiii. 18; 2 Kings ii. 19, xxiv. 12); (2) Hamutal would seem to have been possessed of special influence (her son Jehoahaz came to the throne before his elder half-brother Jehoiakim; 2 Kings xxiii. 31, 36); (3) we can hardly explain otherwise the omission of Jehoiakim, the son of Zebidah; but, as Davidson points out, Jehoiakim died in peace, and so would not necessarily have a place in the elegy at all. Other reasons given are unconvincing; and verses 10–13 would not only, to us, be tasteless if applied to a queen-mother, but also unparalleled in Hebrew literature.

3. one of her whelps: Jehoahaz, who reigned three months (2 Kings xxiii. 32), and was then carried prisoner into Egypt, 608 B. C. Observe that a new era is begun by the death of Josiah himself, who is not mentioned here.

5. she saw that she had waited. This makes poor sense; LXX reads 'that he had been driven from her.' None of the suggestions are satisfactory—'was sick,' 'was sore entreated,' or '(her hope) was fallen to the ground.'

another of her whelps—Jehoiachin; for the passing over of Jehoiakim, see note on verse 2. Jehoiakim reigned for eleven years (608–597 B. C.). Jehoiachin's reign lasted three months: it was in his captivity that Ezekiel himself was deported (see Introd., p. 13). If the 'mother' were Hamutal, there would be as little reason for mentioning the son as the father; and Kraetzschmar takes verse 5 to refer to Zedekiah; but (unless we alter the position of this chapter) Zedekiah is still on the throne; nor has Ezekiel sufficient respect for him to make so long a reference to him as this.

6. Cf. verse 3; the descriptions, as in verse 7, are conventional; neither king could be much more than a *roi-fainéant*.

devoured men. And he knew their palaces, and laid 7
waste their cities; and the land was desolate, and the fulness thereof, because of the noise of his roaring. Then 8
the nations set against him on every side from the provinces: and they spread their net over him; he was
taken in their pit. And they put him in a cage with hooks, 9
and brought him to the king of Babylon; they brought him into strong holds, that his voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of Israel.

Thy mother was like a vine, in thy blood, planted by 10
the waters: she was fruitful and full of branches by reason
of many waters. And she had strong rods for the sceptres 11

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7. palaces. The Hebrew text (so R.V. margin) reads 'widows': which with a slight change, or, if we may trust the analogy of the corresponding Assyrian word (Delitzsch), no change at all, becomes 'palaces,' which preserves the parallel to 'cities'; in any case the image is not kept up. Another easy alteration would give us 'dwelling-places' instead of 'palaces.' For 'knew' some word meaning 'ravaged' seems probable.

8. set is left without object in the Hebrew; probably either 'voice' or 'snare' should be supplied.

9. cage. The word is probably borrowed from Assyrian. Assurbanipal refers to a cage placed at the east gate of Nineveh in which he kept an Arabian monarch imprisoned. Compare the stories of Tamerlane. Hooks were actually used for dragging captives away. The metre requires some alteration in the text; the second 'they brought him' should in any case be omitted. For 'the mountains of Israel' see note on vi. 2. These two princes may be said to have deserved this lament, if not by their deeds, by the tragedy of their fate.

xix. 10–14. *The elegy over Judah.* The figure of the vine (chaps. xv, xvii) is resumed; a fresh reason against identifying the 'mother' with Hamutal.

10. Thy mother, Cf. verse 2.

in thy blood. The text must be wrong here; LXX has 'on a pomegranate,' which suggests the reading 'in a vineyard'; but how would so simple a reading come to be altered? Other conjectures are easy and unconvincing.

many waters. Cf. xvii. 5.

11. The LXX here reads 'a rod' and 'a sceptre.'

of them that bare rule, and their stature was exalted among the thick boughs, and they were seen in their
12 height with the multitude of their branches. But she was plucked up in fury, she was cast down to the ground, and the east wind dried up her fruit: her strong rods were
13 broken off and withered; the fire consumed them. And now she is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty
14 land. And fire is gone out of the rods of her branches, it hath devoured her fruit, so that there is in her no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.

20 And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth

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them that bare rule may express the power of Israel in earlier times (Davidson), or simply carry on the hyperbole of verses 3 and 7.

12, 13. These verses can refer as easily to the condition of Judah before as after the final agony. 'A dry and thirsty land' is metaphorical, and does not refer to Babylon. All that was best in Jerusalem had been removed when Ezekiel himself was deported. See Introd., pp. 12 ff.

14. out of the rods: or, as LXX and R. V. margin, 'a rod.' This verse must be resumptive, since in verse 12 neither rods nor fruit are left. The cause of the city's ruin is the folly of her princes; their short reigns had at least shown no promise of statesmanship or piety: see 2 Kings xxiii. 32, xxiv. 9.

and shall be: literally 'and it has become.' This note is not necessarily a part of the original composition, which would hardly be a popular dirge before the actual fall of Jerusalem.

SECTION V. THIRD CYCLE OF THREATS (xx–xxiv).

This section is dated a year later than that which begins in chap. viii. It is the last section before the fall of the city, and the prophecies are all uttered within three years before the fatal day. The prophet's judicial calmness and his strong excitement are equally remarkable. The section begins with a second lengthy arraignment of the nation (chap. xx), in which no figure is used; but the one motive, both of delay, of punishment, and of restoration, is Yahweh's care for his name, lest it should be profaned. This is followed by an obscure fragment of prophecy against 'the *month,* the tenth *day* of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the LORD, and sat

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forest of the South,' which in its turn prepares the way for a long and involved rhapsody of imminent slaughter—the Sword Song (chap. xxi), in which the picture of the ruin of Israel is placed beside that of Ammon's destruction, as Nebuchadnezzar advances westward. The prophet then passes to a third arraignment of Judah (chap. xxii), in which he adopts the tone of a passionate accuser, and includes in his picture of resolute guilt each class in the community. As if this were not enough to justify the desolation of the city, he resumes (in chap. xxiii) the figure of chap. xvi, and describes the guilt both of Samaria and of Judah, but he mingles figure and reality in such a manner that the national sin appears even more repulsive and loathsome. All the prophet's bitterness, indignation, and contempt are concentrated in the unsparing and terrible realism of this chapter. The last prophecy is uttered on the day when the siege begins. In a mood of fierce irony Ezekiel recalls the caldron image he had previously quoted and startlingly reapplied, and now gives it a further application; he then learns that he is to lose his wife. She dies the same day, and in the necessity laid on him to show no outward sign of grief he sees the prediction of the utter paralysis of despair that will fall on the inhabitants of Jerusalem when the crash comes. When it has come he will be free to speak once more.

These passages throw a still more interesting light on the personality of Ezekiel, and on the meaning of prophecy. As the calamity approaches, his own consciousness of it deepens. Now he stifles his excitement; now he is mastered by it; now it fires his more judicial utterances with a strange passion; now he shrinks before the disaster; and again he triumphs at the thought of its finality. But for the time it paralyses his deeper powers of thought. This section makes no advance either in the interpretation of God's purpose in restoration (except in xx. 40–42, which is the fullest announcement of restoration in the first half of the book), or in the philosophy of responsibility. It is as if the prophet thinks less and sees and feels more. The description of the Babylonian king at the cross-roads is startling in its vividness (chap. xxi); the final calamity, however long foreseen, is appallingly sudden (chap. xxiv); and no such indictment against a whole people as that in chap. xxiii has ever been uttered before or since.

Chap. xx falls into four divisions—verses 1–26, a retrospect of the nation's sin in Egypt (5–9) and in the first generation (10–17) and the second generation (18–26) in the wilderness; verses 27–32, a rapid review of the idolatry in Palestine; verses 33–44.

2 before me. And the word of the LORD came unto me,
3 saying, Son of man, speak unto the elders of Israel,
and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Are ye
come to inquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I
4 will not be inquired of by you. Wilt thou judge them,
son of man, wilt thou judge them? cause them to know

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the restoration to purity (33-42) and self-loathing (43-44); the remainder of the chapter has no special connexion with what has preceded it. The arraignment, as a whole, stands midway between chaps. xvi and xxiii. In chap. xvi the figure was preserved, with more or less completeness, throughout; here no figure is used at all; the prophet will not run the risk of failing to be perfectly explicit. Hence periods of Israel's history, there passed over lightly, are here emphasized. We find the actual idolatry of the people traced back to the Egyptian bondage (verse 8), and the main attention is concentrated on the sins in the wilderness instead of on the foreign alliances later on (cf. Ps. cvi, Acts vii). Further, the order in chap. xvi is—the original kindness of Yahweh, the long ingratitude of Israel, and the final punishment; here the attitude of Yahweh—not at the beginning and the end only, but at every stage in the history—is emphasized (verses 8, 13, 21, 29). The language shows special affinity with the Priestly narrative and code, and more particularly with Lev. xvii-xxvi; while the style recalls the ample discourses of Deuteronomy. Smend and Kraetzschmar have urged that the promise of verses 40-44 implies that the fall of Jerusalem had already taken place; but in any case the doom is virtually accomplished; what he says here he has partly said already (cf. vi. 9, xvi. 60); his thoughts now begin to travel beyond the moment of crisis. The earlier part of the chapter is as formal in its style as chap. xviii.

xx. 1-4. *Introduction.*

1. In August, 590 B.C. For the elders' visits, cf. viii. 1, xiv. 1.

3. The elders come with an inquiry on some particular point; they receive a general discourse on the sins of the past. In chaps. viii and xiv no such inquiry is mentioned, but in chap. xiv it is implied: and the expectation of an answer, there as here, was disappointed. Cf. Matt. xii. 39, xxiv. 3, 4.

4. Wilt thou judge them? The phrase, repeated in xxii. 2 and xxiii. 36, is characteristic of this section. Elsewhere, Yahweh forbids Ezekiel's natural commiseration of his people (xi. 13). This judgement consists in recapitulating the sins of the past, as did Stephen when arraigned before the Sanhedrin (Acts vii).

the abominations of their fathers; and say unto them, 5
Thus saith the Lord God: In the day when I chose Israel,
and lifted up mine hand unto the seed of the house of
Jacob, and made myself known unto them in the land of
Egypt, when I lifted up mine hand unto them, saying, I am
the Lord your God; in that day I lifted up mine hand 6
unto them, to bring them forth out of the land of Egypt
into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk
and honey, which is the glory of all lands: and I said 7
unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of
his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt;

Note that all this implies the corporate national responsibility which chap. xviii seemed to set aside.

xx. 5-9. *The iniquities in Egypt.*

5. chose. This idea of selection is common in Deuteronomy, but occurs only here in Ezekiel. The expression implies that previously to this there was no special relation between Yahweh and Israel: cf. xvi. 3. The patriarchs are unmentioned save for the reference in xxxiii. 24. The purpose underlying Yahweh's choice is the same as that expressed in Amos iii. 2 (where 'known' is used for 'chosen').

lifted up mine hand, in oath or covenant. The similar phrase in xvi. 27 has the opposite meaning of punishment: cf. verses 22, 23.

made myself known—through Moses: cf. Exod. iii. 6 ff.

6. day: to be taken, as often, for 'period.'

milk and honey. Cf. Exod. iii. 8: for 'glory,' cf. verse 15; Exod. xiv. 15; Jer. iii. 19.

7. This command, and the occasion for it, are unmentioned in any of the narratives of Israel's sojourn in Egypt. That Semitic nomads settling temporarily in Egypt would join Egyptian religious practices to their own is not impossible; the newly discovered temple of Serabit at Sinai shows how Semitic and Egyptian worships could exist together[1]; but Ezekiel's thought is more probably that wherever Israel came into contact with heathenism she would be corrupted by it. It is noteworthy that the characteristic beliefs of Egypt have left no trace on Israelite thought. Chap. xvi. 26 refers only to later political alliances (see note ad loc.).

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[1] See Petrie and Currelly, *Researches in Sinai*; cf. also note on p. 16.

8 I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against me
and would not hearken unto me; they did not every man
cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they
forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said I would pour out
my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them
9 in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I wrought for
my name's sake, that it should not be profaned in the sight
of the nations, among whom they were, in whose sight I
made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out
10 of the land of Egypt. So I caused them to go forth out
of the land of Egypt, and brought them into the wilderness.
11 And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them
my judgements, which if a man do, he shall live in them.
12 Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign

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8. In the early narratives the rebelliousness which rouses Yahweh's desire to accomplish his anger against Israel only rises in the desert (Exod. xxxii. 9).

then I said: these words occur like a refrain through the chapter: in each case Yahweh's purpose is altered, lest his name should be 'profaned' among the nations. Cf. Ps. cvi. 8. See Introd., p. 36.

xx. 10–17. *The First Generation in the Wilderness.*

10. Ezekiel here makes no reference to the Red Sea; his thought of God's wrath and Israel's disobedience obscures what was to the Hebrew God's crowning mercy.

11. The legislation of Sinai. 'Statutes' and 'Judgements' are characteristic words in Deuteromony: cf. also Lev. xviii. 5 (quoted in Rom. x. 5; Gal. iii. 12). The result of obedience to the law is uniformly represented as life: cf. Deut. iv. 40 and xxxi. 14–21; also Exod. xx. 12. This promise would most naturally apply to the laws of the Book of the Covenant, Exod. xxi. 1—xxiii. 19, which contain the foundations of all stable social life; but the principle includes all the legislation, moral and ritual, as it develops. It is doubtful whether any of the O. T. legislation, in the form in which we now possess it, actually dates from the wilderness.

12. sabbaths: cf. Exod. xx. 8. In earlier times the Sabbath appears as a day of rest (2 Kings iv. 23) and an opportunity, like the 'new moon' (1 Sam. xx. 5), for feasting and even licentiousness

between me and them, that they might know that I am
the LORD that sanctify them. But the house of Israel 13
rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not
in my statutes, and they rejected my judgements, which
if a man do, he shall live in them ; and my sabbaths they
greatly profaned: then I said I would pour out my fury
upon them in the wilderness, to consume them. But I 14
wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be profaned
in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I brought them

(Hos. ii. 11 ; Isa. i. 13 ; cf. Amos viii. 5 ; also 2 Kings xi. 5 ff.). It has often been compared to the Babylonian institution of the 'šabattu' or 'nubattum' ; these, however, were days of abstinence rather than merely of rest (*dies nefasti*), and seem to have occurred every seventh day after the new moon rather than simply to have marked the week. The nineteenth day of the month was also a 'Sabbath' in Babylon ; and there is evidence that a five-day week ran through the Babylonian year. (It is noticeable that a distinctly small proportion of Babylonian business documents are signed on the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth of the month in Hammurabi's time, and also later.) There is little evidence for the modern view that the Sabbath was an institution taken over from Babylonia. Originally perhaps an institution common to the Semitic peoples, it had come to be profaned or misused in Israel, like other sacred things (verse 13). Hence, both immediately before and after the exile, the necessity for upholding its sanctity (Jer. xvii ; Isa. lviii ; Neh. xiii) ; the mportance of the Sabbath as a religious institution would naturally be increased in the exile, since its observance was not necessarily confined to Palestine. In the Priestly legislation, the mention of the Sabbath is almost confined to Lev. xvii–xxvi, where the highest importance is assigned to it. It is not referred to in Genesis, nor in Ezra, nor in Psalms, Proverbs, nor Job. In N. T. times its due observance stood in the forefront of all obedience to he law.

13. profaned. The only mention of the Sabbath in the earliest egislation is in the Decalogue—the simple prohibition of all work. This would sufficiently mark the Sabbath off from ordinary days ; profanation consisted in treating the special like the ordinary. Cf. xxii. 26.

14. For this interest of the nations in Israel, cf. verse 22 ; Exod. xxxii. 12 ; Deut. xxix. 22–29.

15 out. Moreover also I lifted up my hand unto them in
the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land
which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey,
16 which is the glory of all lands; because they rejected my
judgements, and walked not in my statutes, and profaned
my sabbaths: for their heart went after their idols.
17 Nevertheless mine eye spared them from destroying
them, neither did I make a full end of them in the
18 wilderness. And I said unto their children in the wilderness,
Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither
observe their judgements, nor defile yourselves with their
19 idols: I am the Lord your God; walk in my statutes,
20 and keep my judgements, and do them: and hallow my
sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you,
21 that ye may know that I am the Lord your God. But
the children rebelled against me; they walked not in my
statutes, neither kept my judgements to do them, which
if a man do, he shall live in them; they profaned my
sabbaths: then I said I would pour out my fury upon
them, to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.
22 Nevertheless I withdrew mine hand, and wrought
for my name's sake, that it should not be profaned in the

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xx. 18-26. *The Second Generation in the Wilderness.*

18. Their idols: cf. verses 7, 8, 24. In Deuteronomy the warnings are rather against the idolatry of Israel's present and future environment—Midian and Moab, Beth-Peor and Canaan. Exod. xxxii. 1 also implies novelty.

20. a sign: Ezekiel here recognizes the value of the Sabbath as a constantly recurring reminder of Yahweh's relation to his people: cf. Gen. ix. 17.

22. I withdrew mine hand: contrast verse 23. The tense employed suggests that this leniency was continuous. 'I kept my hand withdrawn, and yet I wrought . . . and I, even I (the pronoun is emphatic) lifted up my hand as a token that I swore to scatter them.' The clause 'I withdrew,' &c., however, is not found in the LXX.

sight of the nations, in whose sight I brought them forth.
Moreover I lifted up mine hand unto them in the wilder- 23
ness, that I would scatter them among the nations, and
disperse them through the countries; because they had 24
not executed my judgements, but had rejected my statutes,
and had profaned my sabbaths, and their eyes were after
their fathers' idols. Moreover also I gave them statutes 25
that were not good, and judgements wherein they should
not live; and I polluted them in their own gifts, in that 26
they caused to pass through *the fire* all that openeth the

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23. that I would scatter them. This implies that the exile was a punishment for the sins committed in the wilderness, or rather for the evil disposition which manifested itself even at that early stage of Israel's history. But the sins of the wilderness had not to wait for their punishment till those distant generations.

25. statutes that were not good. This striking expression must not be explained away; it is after all only in accordance with the general Hebrew view that God is the author alike of good and evil (Amos iii. 6; Job ii. 10), and that He can therefore even deceive men (see note on xiv. 9). Hence, since Israel has obviously been carrying out statutes that are not good, they must have been really given by Yahweh, but as a punishment, a judicially inflicted blindness. Viewed in this way, the thought is an application to history of the doom of Isa. vi. 10: cf. Ps. xviii. 26. There could be no clearer instance of the principle 'peccatum poena peccati.' In spite of James i. 13, the Biblical writers are convinced that there is a system of action and reaction between man's choice and God's treatment: cf. Acts vii. 42. Sin causes a hopeless blurring of the distinction between right and wrong; this result, both prophets and apostles assert, is not only allowed, but sent by God. It is needless, for any one who accepts the Theistic position, to discuss which term is more correct. By the grace of God, as Ezekiel saw, the new heart is given, from the possession of which flows an entirely different set of consequences: cf. Rom. v. 20. It is noteworthy that Jeremiah (vii. 31, xix. 5) takes the simpler view of these 'statutes,' i. e., that obedience to them had nothing to do with Yahweh. Cf. chap. xxiii. 39; also Acts vii. 42.

26. Cf. Exod. xiii. 2: 'Sanctify unto me all the firstborn; whatsoever openeth the womb . . . it is mine.' In Num. viii. 16, the Levites, as devoted to Yahweh, are the substitutes for all the firstborn (cf. Exod. xxxiv. 20). The practice of child sacrifice is womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the LORD.

27 Therefore, son of man, speak unto the house of Israel, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: In this moreover have your fathers blasphemed me, in that they

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always reprobated in the O. T. in terms of horror, nor is it ever spoken of elsewhere as a penalty (see note on xvi. 20). It certainly existed, however, in the surrounding nations, and in Israel (cf. 2 Kings iii. 27, xvi. 3, xvii. 17, xxi. 6, xxiii. 10). On the site of Gezer, 'all round the feet of the columns and over the whole area of the High Place, the earth was discovered to be a regular cemetery, in which the skeletons of young children were buried . . . two at least of the skeletons showed marks of fire' (Macalister, *Biblical Side-lights from the Mound of Gezer*). Whereever the Phoenicians went there was child sacrifice. After the battle of Himera, 480 B. C., Gelo required the defeated Carthaginians no longer to sacrifice children to Baal (see Frazer, *Golden Bough*, ii. 39); but the practice was not put down in Carthage till the time of Tiberius. As for Israel, Tophet, the valley of the sons of Hinnom, was the cultus place for burning children to Molech, the Canaanite God. Cf. Isa. xxx. 33 (where 'the king' should probably be read 'Molech'). Ezek. xxiii. 29 shows that there was no rivalry between the worship of Yahweh and that of the idols in the minds of the people.

Frazer (*Golden Bough*, ii. 38) deduces the origin of the Passover from a Semitic custom of sacrificing the firstborn. Wellhausen (*Proleg.* p. 90) and W. Robertson Smith (*Religion of the Semites*, p. 465) doubt this. The real order of development of thought appears to be (1) all of the firstborn belong to God, but they are only to be actually offered to Him in special cases; Gen. xxii and Exod. xxii. 28 seem to suggest this; (2) representative offerings to God replace all firstborn males; (3) a literal interpretation of the command, under the influence of surrounding heathenism, is made in times of stress, and (Ezek. xx. 16) as a result of penal error. That all the firstborn were ever offered seems inconceivable. Clearly this was not the case in Moab (2 Kings iii. 37); but the fact that the children's skeletons at Gezer mostly belong to infants under a week old certainly suggests it.

xx. 27-32. *Israel's wickedness in Palestine.* The prophet's tone now grows warmer as he turns upon his hearers, seeing in them the representatives of the disobedient nation.

27. This verse belongs to both sections, but it appears to point forwards; and so the Revisers understand it.

have committed a trespass against me. For when I had 28
brought them into the land, which I lifted up mine hand
to give unto them, then they saw every high hill, and
every thick tree, and they offered there their sacrifices,
and there they presented the provocation of their offering,
there also they made their sweet savour, and they poured
out there their drink offerings. Then I said unto them, 29
What meaneth the high place whereunto ye go? So the
name thereof is called Bamah unto this day. Wherefore 30
say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Do
ye pollute yourselves after the manner of your fathers?
and go ye a whoring after their abominations? and 31
when ye offer your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass
through the fire, do ye pollute yourselves with all your
idols, unto this day? and shall I be inquired of by you,
O house of Israel? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will
not be inquired of by you: and that which cometh into 32
your mind shall not be at all; in that ye say, We will be
as the nations, as the families of the countries, to serve

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28. provocation: cf. Isa. i. 13, 14.

offering: the word here used is *Korban*, which occurs elsewhere only in Leviticus and Numbers, and in Mark vii. 11.

29. Ezekiel here suggests a word-play on the word for altar (*bamah*) as if it were derived from the root *bo*, 'to go' (perhaps, as Ewald suggests, in an impure sense). Philologically, the word has no certain congeners in Hebrew. It appears also in the Moabite inscription of Mesha.

30. Idolatry always seems to call forth this bitter irony from Ezekiel as from Isaiah. Cf. verse 34. What these idols were like may be conjectured from an image of the two-horned Astarte found at Gezer, and many roughly-executed clay images of cows. Cf. 1 Kings xii. 32.

31. pollute yourselves: cf. verse 26. The meaning of the word is similar to that of 'profane,' but is less technical; idolatry is like dirt, and makes a man actually filthy. The word is very common in Leviticus, where it is specifically used of the pollution of leprosy.

32. We will be as the nations. This assimilation was both

33 wood and stone. As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely
with a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, and
34 with fury poured out, will I be king over you: and I will
bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of
the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand,
and with a stretched out arm, and with fury poured out:
35 and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and
36 there will I plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded
with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt,
37 so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD. And I will
cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into

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unconscious (Judges i. 27–36 shows how permeating would be the Canaanite influence) and conscious (in the case of the political and religious alliances).

xx. 33–47. *The restoration to purity.*

33. a mighty hand, and a . . . stretched out arm. This phrase occurs several times in Deuteronomy (iv. 34, v. 15, &c.) for God's strength displayed in deliverance; here Ezekiel, with characteristic unexpectedness, joins it to 'fury poured out' (cf. verse 8) to denote Yahweh's wrath with the people whom he must still further punish before he can deliver them. And yet, as the phrase suggests, it is the heathen who will really suffer.

will I be king. Perhaps there is a play here on 'king' (*melek*) and Molech, or Melek, in whose honour the children were sacrificed (verses 26, 31).

35. wilderness of the peoples. The desert which stretched between Syria and Babylon; this desert will witness Yahweh's victorious argument with his people, as that of Sinai witnessed his argument with their fathers. Round this desert lie 'the peoples,' Babylon, Assyria, Syria, &c.; and they are to be there alone with Yahweh, 'face to face.' Cf. Hos. ii. 3, 14. See Map.

plead, in the forensic sense, as often in Isaiah (cf. G. A. Smith, *Book of Isaiah*, vol. i. pp. 6 ff.).

37. cause you to pass: not as the children were caused to pass through the fire, verses 26, 31.

under the rod: the figure is that of a shepherd numbering his flock and perhaps separating the sheep from the goats (cf. verse 38, and Matt. xxv. 32); the rod naturally becomes the yoke of the covenant, God's mercy and man's duty. LXX omits the

the bond of the covenant; and I will purge out from 38
among you the rebels, and them that transgress against
me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they
sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel:
and ye shall know that I am the LORD. As for you, O 39
house of Israel, thus saith the Lord GOD: Go ye, serve
every one his idols, and hereafter also, if ye will not
hearken unto me: but my holy name shall ye no more
profane with your gifts, and with your idols. For in mine 40
holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel,
saith the Lord GOD, there shall all the house of Israel, all
of them, serve me in the land: there will I accept them,
and there will I require your offerings, and the firstfruits of
your oblations, with all your holy things. As a sweet 41
savour will I accept you, when I bring you out from the
peoples, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye
have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you in
the sight of the nations. And ye shall know that I am 42

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reference to the covenant, and reads 'by number,' carrying on the figure of the shepherd; cf. Milton, *l'Allegro*:

> And every shepherd tells his tale
> Under the hawthorn in the dale.

38. The rebellious will be brought out of Babylon only to perish in the wilderness, like the rebellious generation who came out of Egypt.

39. Further irony. The particle translated 'if' is really a sign of asseveration. 'Serve your idols, then; but afterwards you will certainly listen to me.'

40. Note the quick transition from verse 39 to 40; which, however, is the less difficult since the old bad worship was really directed to Yahweh, but in a wrong way and at a wrong time.

mine holy mountain. Ezekiel does not elsewhere use this phrase: cf. Isa. lvi. 7.

require your offerings: much stronger than 'accept' above. Cf. Mic. vi. 8.

41. sanctified: the opposite to the profanation of verses 9, 14, &c.

the LORD, when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country which I lifted up mine hand to give unto
43 your fathers. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have polluted yourselves; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all
44 your evils that ye have committed. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your evil ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

45, 46 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward the south, and drop *thy word* toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the

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xx. 43-44. *Restoration through self-loathing.* Cf. xxxvi. 16-38: 'for my sake, not yours' (verse 22), 'be ashamed of your evil ways' (verse 32). But there Ezekiel passes straight on to the 'heart of flesh.' The distance between the two prophecies is enough to defend the place of this present passage among the pre-exilic discourses. The tone of these verses is very different from the glorious anticipation of Isa. xl-lvi; but it is a truer prediction when we remember the dismal circumstances of the return: cf. Ezra iii. 12; Neh. viii. 9. See note on xvi. 6.

xx. 45-49. *The destruction of the Forest of the South.* In the Hebrew these verses commence the following chapter, and they would seem to date from the time of the composition of that chapter. With chap. xx, both in style and subject-matter, they are quite unconnected. The division of chapters in LXX is the same as that in the English versions.

46. the South. Three words are here used for 'South.' The first, 'Teman,' is a general name for Edom; 'Darom' is the light or sunny region, used in Job xxxvii. 17 of the south wind; the third, 'Negeb,' was the usual term for the hill-country south of Judah, from Beer-sheba to Kadesh barnea. Ezekiel is now, in imagination, inside Jerusalem, whither the army of Nebuchadnezzar is steadily drawing nearer.

drop ***thy word*****:** cf. Amos vii. 16, Mic. ii. 6-11, where the phrase is used in a contemptuous or slighting sense; but not so here, or in xxi. 2.

forest of the field: this denotes no more than the trees

field in the South; and say to the forest of the South, 47
Hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD:
Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour
every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming
flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south
to the north shall be burnt thereby. And all flesh shall 48
see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be
quenched. Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, 49
Is he not a speaker of parables?

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son **21**

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scattered over the open countryside. There were no 'forests' in the south, as in Gilead and the hilly country on the east of Jordan, though trees were probably once less sparse than now. (See G. A. Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, pp. 80, 148, 522). Much of the territory of Judah was physically indistinguishable from the Negeb. This 'south country', along with Ammon, is Nebuchadnezzar's objective.

47. The green and the dry correspond to the righteous and the wicked (cf. xxi. 3), in spite of the contention of chap. xviii. 'Flaming flame' precisely represents Ezekiel's tautological expression.

48. An indirect piece of evidence that Ezekiel spoke his prophecies and did not simply write them. The reference is to verses 46–48, and the listeners suggest that the prophet's words are only pictures—not realities; cf. xxxiii. 31–33, also iv. 14, ix. 8, xi. 13.

xxi. *The Song of the Sword.* At the close of the reasoned and formal exposition of the nation's sin in chap. xx the prophet burst into a fragment of prophetic denunciation (xx. 45). The impulse, instead of spending itself, now gains a stronger hold on him, and forces him into a state of wild excitement, reminding the reader of chap. vii, but going far beyond that chapter in lyrical intensity, in proportion to the greater nearness of the end. The chapter falls into five loosely connected sections, of which the third and fourth may be taken as interludes in the development of the main subject. In the first section the prophet's frenzy is still partly under control; but the flame of which he prophesied in xx. 47 now concentrates itself into the vision of a drawn sword, which is stretched out over the land from south to north (cf. xx. 47), and the repeated cries of 'It is coming' (cf. 'an end!' in chap. vii) mark the rising tide of excitement.

In the second strophe (verses 8–17) it would seem as if the prophet had seized a sword and was brandishing it wildly; the

of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and drop *thy word* toward the sanctuaries, and prophesy against the land of
3 Israel; and say to the land of Israel, Thus saith the LORD: Behold, I am against thee, and will draw forth my sword out of its sheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous
4 and the wicked. Seeing then that I will cut off from thee

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sentences spring from his lips in wild irregular jerks, as the sword flashes to and fro and burns its way, so to speak, into the prophet's imagination. Suddenly, in the third strophe (verses 18–23), there is a moment's calm; the vision of the sword is succeeded by a more detailed vision of Nebuchadnezzar, arrested in his advance westward by uncertainty as to whether Jerusalem or Ammon shall be first attacked. The prophet sees his acts of divination with the keen sight of a clairvoyant. Before the act is complete, however, the thought of Jerusalem and its sin turns his mind elsewhere, and in the fourth strophe (verses 24–27), with words that are still calm, yet obscure and irregular, he returns to the coming disaster, now seen not simply as disaster but retribution. Then (verses 28–32) the thought of Ammon re-enters his mind; snatching the sword again, and repeating phrases already used in another connexion, he turns upon Ammon the stream of his denunciation until, as he sheathes his sword, his speech grows more intelligible, and the frenzy dies away.

Such is the most natural explanation of the chapter. To make it yield coherent sense throughout, like chap. xx, is impossible. One is reminded of Virgil's description of the Cumaean Sybil (*Aen.* vi. 100 'obscuris vera involvens,' &c.). It is not surprising that the breathless transitions of thought have puzzled the copyists, and that the text is in places incurably corrupt. Such a frenzy would have been impossible for Isaiah or Jeremiah, but intelligible in a mind like Ezekiel's, capable of passing from scholastic reasoning to trance, from the logical to the dithyrambic.

xxi. 1–7. *The drawing of the sword.*

2. the sanctuaries: as the reading of LXX suggests, this is probably a mistake for 'her sanctuaries.' R. G. Moulton has suggested that at this point Ezekiel actually draws a sword.

3. the righteous and the wicked: here, as in xx. 47, Ezekiel overlooks the whole argument of chap. xviii; but he is certainly more true to the facts of the case than his desire for clearness allowed him to be then: cf. Luke xiii. 4. The passage shows conclusively that there has been no very careful editing: cf. note on xxix. 17.

the righteous and the wicked, therefore shall my sword
go forth out of its sheath against all flesh from the south
to the north: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD 5
have drawn forth my sword out of its sheath; it shall not
return any more. Sigh therefore, thou son of man; with 6
the breaking of thy loins and with bitterness shalt thou
sigh before their eyes. And it shall be, when they say 7
unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt say,
Because of the tidings, for it cometh: and every heart
shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit
shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: behold,
it cometh, and it shall be done, saith the Lord GOD.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son 8, 9
of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the LORD: Say, A
sword, a sword, it is sharpened, and also furbished: it is 10
sharpened that it may make a slaughter; it is furbished
that it may be as lightning: shall we then make mirth?

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4. Ezekiel here sees the destruction as ranging over the entire world; the terror of the vision is both intensive and extensive.

6. sigh: cf. xi. 13, xxiv. 16. There is no real contradiction; here the coming desolation calls forth a convulsive shudder from the prophet, the reason of which he then explains to those who re watching him. Cf. verse 12.

7. Cf. vii. 17.

xxi. 8–16. *The sharpening of the sword.* The growth of the prophet's agitation is shown by the constant repetitions: cf. vii. 1–6. The whole section falls into four strophes: verses 8–11, 12–13, 4–15^{a}, 15^{b}–17.

10. that it may be: cf. verse 28; the Hebrew word translated furbished' is probably identical with 'pointed,' in verse 15; Cornill suggests simply 'that it may shine.'

The second part of the verse is extremely difficult. If the Hebrew text (literally translated in R. V.) is retained, the reference must be to the ignorant carelessness of those who were jesting while their destruction was on its way to them; for which we may perhaps compare the situation hinted at in i. 3; but the expression seems unnatural. Smend and Kraetzchmar by a slight change read 'woe to the prince' (or 'princes')

11 the rod of my son, it contemneth every tree. And it is given to be furbished, that it may be handled: the sword, it is sharpened, yea, it is furbished, to give it into the hand
12 of the slayer. Cry and howl, son of man: for it is upon my people, it is upon all the princes of Israel: they are delivered over to the sword with my people: smite
13 therefore upon thy thigh. For there is a trial; and what if even the rod that contemneth shall be no more? saith

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(cf. verse 12). The last clause would appear to mean that the rulers of Israel despise every force that can come against them; 'rod' and (to carry on the metaphor) 'tree' standing for authority or national power. This is in harmony with the preceding clause; the margin has the Hebrew against it; in any case 'my son' is strange in such a context as this; but compare 'my people' in verse 12. Davidson explains the words as meaning 'the rod which chastises my son (i. e. Babylon) despises (is more terrible than) every other power.' The LXX has a string of imperatives: 'slay, despise, set at nought, every tree!' Smend suggests 'thou hast despised the rod, and loathed every tree'; Kraetzschmar, 'that (i. e. the people that) despises me and serves each tree' (referring to the idolatry denounced in xx. 28). It is as easy to make suggestions as it is difficult to be sure they represent the original text; but we can hardly be wrong in comparing verse 13, where 'rod' appears to refer to Judah in her pride rather than to Babylon. If we keep to the Hebrew text, we must suppose that, along with the terror of the sword, the prophet sees the fatal and defiant foolhardiness of Judah at the time of Zedekiah's last revolt.

11. The Hebrew has 'and it (or 'he') will give.' The correction of the R. V. is necessary, or the first person singular must be read. The vagueness of the last clause heightens the weirdness and mystery of the whole.

12. Contrast verse 6. In Jer. xxxi. 19, smiting on the thigh is a sign of dejection and shame; here the following verse shows the sense to be different.

13. As obscure as verse 10. As they stand, the words appear to mean 'such pretensions as those of Judah will not go untested; how if their arrogant power is really flung to the ground?' or, as margin, supplying 'the sword,' 'how if the coming ruin laughs even at them? they will be no more.' But in view of verse 10 it seems better to keep the phrase 'the rod that contemneth.' It would be tempting to read, with Bertholet and Kraetzschmar, a word for 'wrath' or 'among them' in place of 'trial' ('in wrath will I,

the Lord God. Thou therefore, son of man, prophesy, 14
and smite thine hands together; and let the sword be
doubled the third time, the sword of the deadly wounded:
it is the sword of the great one that is deadly wounded,
which entereth into their chambers. I have set the point 15
of the sword against all their gates, that their heart may
melt, and their stumblings be multiplied: ah! it is made
as lightning, it is pointed for slaughter. Gather thee 16
together, go to the right; set thyself in array, go to the

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even I, despise them'); but here also conjectures are too easy to be valuable.

14. smite thine hands together, in wrath, as summoning destruction upon them: cf. verse 17. In xxv. 6 the phrase is used of Ammon's exultation over Judah's misery: see also vi. 11, and xxii. 13.

doubled the third time. The prophet has dropped the sword in verse 13, now he snatches it again, and twice brandishes it (backwards and forwards) three times over. (R. G. Moulton points out that where action accompanies song the words may naturally be unintelligible alone.) It would be simpler to point the consonants of the text, with Kraetzschmar, so as to read 'let the sword be doubled and trebled,' i. e. brandished about.

the deadly wounded. The phrase is taken up again in verses 25 (also of Zedekiah) and 29. This reference to Zedekiah bears out the interpretation of 'the rod that contemneth' (verse 13).

entereth into their chambers: better, as margin, 'he compasseth them about'; the ruin is all round them, as in the terrible days of the siege.

15. the point. The reference is still to the siege. The word is obscure; the translation of the margin, 'consternation,' is borne out by the Arabic; Delitzsch formerly suggested that it is akin to the Assyrian word for 'slaughter,' but the identification is now given up; probably a textual error for 'slaughter.'

ah! it is made as lightning. The prophet's voice rises to a shriek. The cry introduces the fourth strophe of the section. The comparison is an echo of verse 10.

16. Gather thee together, or as R. V. marg., 'make thyself one.' This does not seem a very natural way of addressing the sword, and Cornill and Kraetzschmar prefer a slight alteration which gives 'make thyself sharp.' The next words, **set thyself in array,** are missing in LXX, and not needed by the rhythm.

17 left; whithersoever thy face is set. I will also smite mine hands together, and I will satisfy my fury: I the LORD have spoken it.

18 The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying,
19 Also, thou son of man, appoint thee two ways, that the sword of the king of Babylon may come; they twain shall come forth out of one land: and mark out a place, mark
20 it out at the head of the way to the city. Thou shalt appoint a way, for the sword to come to Rabbah of the

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The consonants are identical, save for one letter, with those of the following word, and would seem to be a copyist's error.

face. The phrase 'face of the sword' is regular in Hebrew for 'edge of the sword.'

17. Cf. verse 14, and v. 13.

xxi. 18–23. *The divination of the king of Babylon.* Here the torrent of the prophet's ecstasy pours itself into a clear pool, in which he sees what has before been the subject of obscure hints. The effect of the sudden change of rhythm, from poetry to prose, may be illustrated by the constant changes of rhythm in the choruses of Greek plays.

19. appoint thee two ways, *lit.* 'place for thyself'; as if the prophet drew a rough map on the ground with the point of the sword (cf. iv. 1). The two roads lead to Jerusalem and to Rabbah.

the sword. An echo of the previous section.

out of one land. Babylon.

place, *lit.* 'hand.' The reference is probably to a sign-post at the head of each road: cf. Jer. xxxi. 21. The same word, 'hand,' is used in 1 Sam. xv. 12 and Isa. lvi. 5. 'The city' stands for 'each city.'

20. Rabbah is now a ruined town on the east of Jordan, twenty-five miles north-east of the north end of the Dead Sea, still called Ammân. It is the only city of Ammon mentioned in the O. T. The name means 'great'; it had been captured by David (2 Sam. xii. 26-31), but had regained its independence. Ammon was now in league with Judah (see Jer. xxvii. 2; in Jer. xl. 11 we read of Jews in Ammon); and in Jerusalem there were hopes that since Nebuchadnezzar was at last invading Palestine he would march first against Ammon, and so allow time for further defence.

children of Ammon, and to Judah in Jerusalem the
defenced. For the king of Babylon stood at the parting 21
of the way, at the head of the two ways, to use divination:
he shook the arrows to and fro, he consulted the teraphim, he looked in the liver. In his right hand was the 22
divination *for* Jerusalem, to set battering rams, to open
the mouth in the slaughter, to lift up the voice with
shouting, to set battering rams against the gates, to cast
up mounts, to build forts. And it shall be unto them as 23
a vain divination in their sight, which have sworn oaths

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21. parting, *lit.* 'mother.'

shook the arrows: two arrows, inscribed respectively with the names of the two cities, would be shaken in a quiver, and one of them drawn out. The practice was well known in Babylon and in Arabia: cf. Isa. xlvii. 8-15.

teraphim, a general name for images, familiar to Israel as well as to her neighbours: cf. Gen. xxxi. 19; Judges xvii. 5; 1 Sam. xix. 13; Hos. iii. 4.

liver. The king cannot trust to one means of foretelling the future. The British Museum contains a clay tablet with a representation of a sheep's liver covered with magic lines and oracles. The importance of the liver for this purpose was known to the Greeks and Romans: cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, xxxii; 'The faculty of prognostication belongs to that part of the soul which is situated in the liver, because that part has no share in reason or thought.' The Babylonian kings could do nothing without the priests, but they relied greatly on conjurers and soothsayers. Sargon II and Nebuchadnezzar, however, unlike the magic-ridden Assurbanipal, set their faces against magic and exalted the national religion. An interesting selection of Babylonian omens is given in Hastings' *Dict. Bib.* vol. v. pp. 558 ff.

22. Nebuchadnezzar pulls out with the right, or 'lucky' hand, the arrow marked 'Jerusalem.'

The siege is also described in iv. 2. The double reference to battering rams is probably a mistake of the copyist's.

23. unto them, i. e. to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, learning of Nebuchadnezzar's decision to attack them first. They do not yet despair.

a vain divination, i. e. they expect that this advance will bring no good to Nebuchadnezzar, since they have their defences and the looked-for help of Egypt: see note on verse 10, also on xi. 3.

unto them: but he bringeth iniquity to remembrance, that they may be taken.

24 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Because ye have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are discovered, so that in all your doings your sins do appear; because that ye are come to
25 remembrance, ye shall be taken with the hand. And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, the prince of Israel, whose day is come, in the time of the iniquity of
26 the end; thus saith the Lord GOD: Remove the mitre,

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which have sworn oaths unto them, 'an unintelligible gloss' (Toy). Ewald reads, 'they think they have weeks and weeks,' i. e. of time in which to prepare. Kraetzschmar ingeniously refers to the oath taken by Zedekiah and the princes (Jer. xxxiv. 8) which they afterwards broke (verse 11); hence, it is Zedekiah who brings the nation's sin to Yahweh's remembrance. The words might seem more naturally to refer to some covenant to hold the city against Babylon; and 'he' instead of a proper name, has been found very difficult. In view of verse 24, Smend suggests that the word for 'he' is really neuter; this is all but impossible grammatically; and a less difficult reference would be to Nebuchadnezzar, as if he were accusing the nation before God by his invasion. On the other hand, the attack upon Zedekiah in the following verses would suggest that the king, though unnamed, has been already in the prophet's mind. Whatever be the prophet's reference in the 'oaths,' the princes still refuse to believe in their danger, and the king's policy forces Yahweh to punish the nation's sin. Cf. 1 Kings xvii. 18.

xxi. 24–27. *The downfall of the prince.* The mention of Judah's sin rouses the prophet's frenzied mood once more; this time the chief object of his fury is Zedekiah.

24. to be remembered, by wilful and prolonged disobedience. Yahweh cannot forget their sin, even if he would.

25. day, hitherto generally used for the day of Yahweh or of the nation, but cf. Hos. vii. 5.

26. mitre: in the Levitical legislation the word is used for the 'turban' of the high-priest (Exod. xxviii. 4, &c.). In view of the care with which xlvi. 10 &c. relegate the prince to the position of a worshipper, the occurrence of 'mitre' as well as 'crown' suggests that Ezekiel is thinking of the performance of priestly functions by the king (1 Kings viii. 64, &c.).

and take off the crown: this *shall be* no more the same: exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high. I 27
will overturn, overturn, overturn it: this also shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it *him*.

And thou, son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith 28
the Lord God concerning the children of Ammon, and concerning their reproach; and say thou, A sword, a sword is drawn, for the slaughter it is furbished, to cause it to devour, that it may be as lightning: whiles 29
they see vanity unto thee, whiles they divine lies unto thee, to lay thee upon the necks of the wicked that are

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no more the same: *lit.* as R. V. marg., 'this shall be not this,' i. e. everything will be flung into confusion, 'turned upside down'; cf. the next verse, 'this shall be no more.'

27. until he come. The imminent ruin recalls the Messianic prophecy of Gen. xlix. 10, where, instead of Shiloh, Ezekiel seems to have read *shelloh*, 'to whom (it is).'

xxi. 28–32. *The death-blow of Ammon.* The prophet's excitement, growing in verse 27, now rises higher; he seizes the sword again, but this time he turns against the Ammonites (verse 20), who might have thought that they would escape when Judah was invaded. The full force, however, of the prophet's mood is spent, and as the sword is sheathed (verse 28) the prophecy ends with a prediction of ruin at once general and vague. Davidson, Kraetzschmar and others date this section later than the rest of the chapter, perhaps after the fall of Jerusalem. Ammon derided the Jews then (xxv. 3); might they not have derided the Jews at their first deportation also? Nor can we, with Smend, Davidson, and Cornill, regard the sword as Ammon's, prepared for conquests which Ammon is to make, unless we separate this section altogether from the rest of the chapter. Both suppositions are unnecessary; they do not remove the difficulties; and Ezekiel may well have felt angered at the self-interested abettors of Judah.

28. furbished . . . lightning. Cf. verses 9, 10.

29. they see vanity: in Ammon too there are diviners; and, like Judah, Ammon is mistaken in its confidence in them.

to lay thee upon the necks, i. e. the result of these divinations will be that Ammon, instead of surviving the invasion of

deadly wounded, whose day is come, in the time of the
30 iniquity of the end. Cause it to return into its sheath.
In the place where thou wast created, in the land of thy
31 birth, will I judge thee. And I will pour out mine
indignation upon thee; I will blow upon thee with the
fire of my wrath: and I will deliver thee into the hand
32 of brutish men, skilful to destroy. Thou shalt be for
fuel to the fire; thy blood shall be in the midst of the
land; thou shalt be no more remembered: for I the
LORD have spoken it.

22 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Nebuchadnezzar, will be involved in the fate that is coming upon Judah. The phrase is not used elsewhere, but the thought appears to be that when Judah (which was to be attacked first) is lying mortally wounded upon the field, Ammon is to be flung upon her body. Cornill and others read 'it' (i. e. 'the sword') instead of 'thee'; but if we are right in taking this section as connected with the preceding the change is unnecessary.

the iniquity of the end: the final wickedness of Judah: cf. verse 24.

30. Cause it to return. Here Ezekiel may be supposed to sheathe the sword. But why should the sword (literally or metaphorically) be sheathed before rather than after the sentence of doom? The sheathing of the sword marks the finality of the judgement sentence (in which case the action would have much dramatic impressiveness). Davidson, who understands the sword to be Ammon's (see note on verse 28), explains this verse to mean 'entertain no dreams of conquest abroad.' In any case Ammon's punishment is to fall on her in the invasion of her own territories.

31. brutish: this is significant for Ezekiel's thought of the Chaldaeans, in whose midst he dwells.

skilful to destroy, *lit.* 'smiths of destruction.' In the earlier stages of civilization the smith has always been regarded with mingled awe and contempt. Later Jewish writings contain references to demons with pitchforks, partly based, no doubt, on this passage, and in its turn influencing mediaeval frescoes of devils.

32. Unlike Judah and Egypt (xxii. 15, &c., and xxix. 12), Ammon is not to be dispersed, but destroyed.

xxii. After the passionate outburst of chap. xxi the prophet (verses 1-16) returns to the theme of chap. xx; but his excitement,

And thou, son of man, wilt thou judge, wilt thou judge 2
he bloody city? then cause her to know all her abomina-
ions. And thou shalt say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: 3
A city that sheddeth blood in the midst of her, that her
me may come, and that maketh idols against herself to
efile her! Thou art become guilty in thy blood that 4
hou hast shed, and art defiled in thine idols which thou
ast made; and thou hast caused thy days to draw near,
nd art come even unto thy years: therefore have I
nade thee a reproach unto the nations, and a mocking
all the countries. Those that be near, and those that 5
e far from thee, shall mock thee, thou infamous one *and*

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ough now under control, is felt in the rhetorical vigour of the tack (note the repeated 'in thee,' and 'to shed blood'); and he thinking rather of the present sins (ritual and ethical) than (as chap. xx) of the past. Then, with the idea of the caldron in his ind, he compares the doomed city (verses 17–22) to a smelting rnace, wherein all the various metals are melted down into one ass; and concludes (verses 23–8) with an analysis of the ickedness of each class in the state. The contrast between aps. xxi and xxii is striking; in chap. xxi the prophet trembles the coming destruction, but does not mention, save in verses 23–, the wickedness which has caused it. In chap. xxii Yahweh's itude is almost one of self-defence ('your wickedness is so great, at I can do nothing but destroy you': see especially verse 30); d for the time, all exultation over the condemned nation is sent.

xxii. 1–16. *Violence and idolatry.*

2. wilt thou judge? Cf. xx. 4.

3. Violence and idolatry are the two great crimes of the andoned city; both are at once moral and ritual pollutions: cf. iv. 6, 9; also Jer. ii. 7, iii. 1, xvi. 18. The same phrase, 'bloody y,' is used by Nahum (iii. 1) of Nineveh. See also Matt. xxiii. 35.

her time: cf. xxi. 25.

against herself: though she knows it not, her idols are her l foes, as calling for her punishment.

4. thy days . . . thy years, of punishment: cf. xxi. 25; Eccles. . 1.

5. infamous: *lit.* polluted in name or reputation.

6 full of tumult. Behold, the princes of Israel, every one according to his power, have been in thee to shed blood.
7 In thee have they set light by father and mother; in the midst of thee have they dealt by oppression with the stranger: in thee have they wronged the fatherless and
8 the widow. Thou hast despised mine holy things, and
9 hast profaned my sabbaths. Slanderous men have been in thee to shed blood: and in thee they have eaten upon the mountains: in the midst of thee they have committed
10 lewdness. In thee have they discovered their fathers' nakedness: in thee have they humbled her that was
11 unclean in her separation. And one hath committed abomination with his neighbour's wife; and anothe hath lewdly defiled his daughter in law; and another i

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full of tumult: see the following verses; *lit.* 'great o mighty, in tumult,' as if disorder were the city's only title to fame.

6. princes: cf. verse 27. Their conduct to Uriah and Jeremia (Jer. xxvi. 21, xxxviii. 4, &c.) is the best commentary on this verse: cf. also Hos. v. 10, vii. 5; Mic. vii. 3; Zeph. iii. 3.

to shed blood. Cf. verses 2, 3, 4, 9, 12.

7. In thee: repeated in verses 10, 12.

Ezekiel begins his accusation with the elementary Hebrew virtues; for parents, cf. Exod. xx. 12; Deut. v. 16; Lev. xix. 5 for 'strangers,' cf. note on xiv. 7; Exod. xxii. 20; Deut. x. 19; fo 'widows,' Exod. xxii. 21; Deut. xxiv. 17. See also note on xviii. 5

8. sabbaths. See note on xx. 12: cf. Exod. xx. 8.

9. After the main sins have been mentioned others follow i no specific order. For 'eating upon the mountains,' &c., cf xviii. 6.

10. The practice of marriage with the father's wife was frequen in Arabian antiquity; but, like much else that was common in th surrounding heathenism, is uniformly looked on with horror in th O. T.: cf. 2 Sam. xvi. 22; Lev. xviii. 7.

her that was unclean. Cf. xviii. 6.

11. Cf. Lev. xviii. 9, 15; 2 Sam. xiii. 13; also for Arabia customs, W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Earl Arabia*, pp. 89, 162. Idolatry meant a return to the lower mor standards of heathenism and the outbreaks of sexual licence ofte observed in connexion with the lower religions.

ee hath humbled his sister, his father's daughter. In 12
ee have they taken bribes to shed blood; thou hast
ken usury and increase, and thou hast greedily gained
thy neighbours by oppression, and hast forgotten me,
ith the Lord GOD. Behold, therefore, I have smitten 13
ine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made,
d at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee.
an thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in 14
e days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have
oken it, and will do it. And I will scatter thee among 15
e nations, and disperse thee through the countries;
d I will consume thy filthiness out of thee. And thou 16
alt be profaned in thyself, in the sight of the nations;
d thou shalt know that I am the LORD.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son 17, 18
man, the house of Israel is become dross unto me:
l of them are brass and tin and iron and lead, in the

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12. Cf. ix. 9, xviii. 18; also Exod. xxiii. 8; Deut. xvi. 19.

13. smitten mine hand: in indignation and loathing: cf. note xxi. 14.

14. This question is generally understood as sarcastic; but see troductory note (p. 187).

15. Contrast the fate of Ammon, xxi. 30.

16. The first clause is difficult. Yahweh is profaned by his ople's idolatries, and by their consequent dispersion among the tions; Israel is profaned and polluted by its sins, and is to be made hamed of its evil deeds by its punishment; but Ezekiel does not sewhere speak of Israel as being profaned, or (as the Hebrew ay also mean) profaning itself, by exile. Read either 'I shall profaned' (so Smend and Davidson) or 'thou shalt be ashamed' Kraetzschmar).

xxii. 17-22. *The smelting furnace.*

18. Elsewhere we read of gold being tried in the fire; but the eaning of the figure here is quite different, and Ezekiel pointedly nits gold from his catalogue of metals. Note the scornfulness the last clause. Cf. Isa. i. 22. This is a matter not of refining s Isa. xlviii. 10) but destruction.

brass: see note on xxvii. 13.

midst of the furnace; they are the dross of silver.
19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Because ye are all
become dross, therefore behold, I will gather you into
20 the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver and brass
and iron and lead and tin into the midst of the furnace,
to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather you
in mine anger and in my fury, and I will lay you there,
21 and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon
you with the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in
22 the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of
the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof;
and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my
fury upon you.

23, 24 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son
of man, say unto her, Thou art a land that is not cleansed,
25 nor rained upon in the day of indignation. There is
a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like
a roaring lion ravening the prey: they have devoured
souls; they take treasure and precious things; they
26 have made her widows many in the midst thereof. Her

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19. I will gather you: apparently a reference to the fact that, as the certainty of siege approaches, the people from the surrounding country are forced to take refuge within the walls of Jerusalem. Cf. Thucyd. ii. 52 (the picture of the country people crowding within the walls of Athens when the Spartans invaded Attica).

xxii. 23–31. *The universal corruption of the state, among princes, priests, magistrates, prophets, and people.* Ezekiel does not accord Zedekiah the honour here of any special reference.

24. nor rained upon: in the East, rain is the great giver of plenty and fertility. Judah is both defiled and parched up as her punishment falls upon her.

25. This description seems more appropriate to the princes. LXX, followed by most commentators, reads 'princes,' using a different word from that in verse 27; prophets are mentioned, as in xiii. 10 ff., in verse 28. The alteration from 'prophets' to 'princes' only needs the change of a single letter.

priests have done violence to my law, and have profaned
mine holy things: they have put no difference between
the holy and the common, neither have they caused men
to discern between the unclean and the clean, and have
hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned
among them. Her princes in the midst thereof are like 27
wolves ravening the prey; to shed blood, *and* to destroy
souls, that they may get dishonest gain. And her 28
prophets have daubed for them with untempered *mortar*,
seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus
saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken.
The people of the land have used oppression, and 29
exercised robbery; yea, they have vexed the poor and
needy, and have oppressed the stranger wrongfully. And 30
I sought for a man among them, that should make up the
fence, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that

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26. For the violence of priests, see Hos. vi. 9. The priests' duty is to teach to the people the difference between the clean and the unclean; cf. xliv. 23. The 'Torah' or 'law' committed o the priests means properly 'instruction.'

hid their eyes: took no trouble to keep my sabbaths hallowed: cf. note on xx. 13.

27. princes: rather, magistrates, compared to wolves, as the princes in verse 25 are compared to lions.

28. Cf. xiii. 10.

29. The sins of the upper classes are faithfully reflected in the ower. For 'stranger,' see verse 7. The phrase, which occurs also in vii. 27, xii. 19, &c., is a technical one in the later Jewish writings.

30. Cf. xiii. 5; and Gen. xviii. 24 ff. In this passage Ezekiel s thinking of a 'Saviour of Society,' who cannot be found. Jeremiah was still in Jerusalem; but he, as he himself knew, could not help: cf. Jer. xi. 14 and xv. 1 (not even a Moses or a Samuel would now be of any use). There is no real conflict between this passage and xiv. 14. There the goodness of the individual is thought of as counterbalancing the wickedness of the many; here, the individual who 'makes up the fence' inspires the many with his own goodness. In Isa. lix. 16, when Yahweh saw that there was no one to deliver, he himself stepped into the breach.

31 I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I brought upon their heads, saith the Lord God.

23 The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying,
2 Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of
3 one mother: and they committed whoredoms in Egypt;

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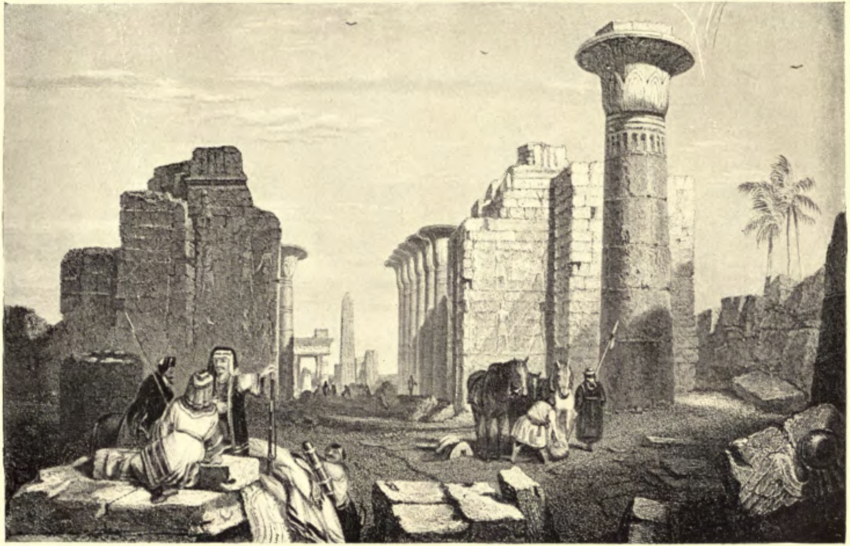
xxiii. After the picture of Judah as she is, Ezekiel once more turns to history, as in chaps. xvi and xx; he employs the same vigorous imagery as in chap. xvi, but he treats here of the later history of the two kingdoms, and lays greater emphasis on their political connexions. Sodom is unmentioned, and, now that the ruin looms larger than ever on his sight, there is no suggestion of any future hope. The contempt with which Ezekiel speaks of the absence of a definite policy in these two nations is unmistakable. Would a definite policy, i.e. a definite conception of the relation of Israel to Assyria and Chaldaea, have been possible in the welter of hopes, fears, and intrigues in Western Asia? Ezekiel does not write as a statesman or diplomatist; the political was merged in the religious interest. But, whatever might have happened to the more exposed Israel, there can be little doubt that had Judah carried out the general prophetic programme of internal stability and order, and of freedom from foreign complications, her geographical position was such that she would not only have escaped, as she actually did in spite of herself, from Sennacherib, but also from Nebuchadnezzar; she was never in real danger from Egypt.

Ezekiel begins by introducing Samaria and Jerusalem or Judah as two sisters, harlots (verses 1–4); he describes the intrigues of Samaria (verses 5–10), and then (verses 11–21) those of Judah, with Assyria, Chaldaea, and Egypt. Such sin (verses 22–35) can only be punished by its instruments (cf. xvi. 37 ff.), and the description is concluded (verses 36–49) by a fresh picture of the crimes and the penalty of the two guilty women.

xxiii. 1–5. *The two sisters.*

2. Samaria and Jerusalem are sisters in xvi. 46; hence, the daughters of one mother.

3. in Egypt: cf. verse 8 and xx. 8 (see note *ad loc.*). The word for 'bruise' is used, in Lev. xxii. 24, for 'castrate.' Throughout this chapter the 'realism' of Ezekiel is much more developed and detailed than in chap. xvi. It is all the more striking to us because, in comparison with other ancient literature, Indian and Babylonian, and even with Homer and Elizabethan poetry, the



Drawing by C. Stanfield, A.R.A.

THEBES: TEMPLE OF NO AMMON

they committed whoredoms in their youth: there were their breasts pressed, and there they bruised the teats of their virginity. And the names of them were Oholah 4 the elder, and Oholibah her sister: and they became mine, and they bare sons and daughters. And as for their names, Samaria is Oholah, and Jerusalem Oholibah. And Oholah played the harlot when she was mine; and 5 she doted on her lovers, on the Assyrians *her* neighbours, which were clothed with blue, governors and rulers, all of 6 them desirable young men, horsemen riding upon horses.

Bible as a whole is remarkably reticent and refined. In this chapter Ezekiel aims at making sin appear monstrous.

4. For the similarity between these two names, Ewald compares Hasan and Husain. The two names probably do not mean, as R. V. margin, 'Her tent,' and 'My tent is in her,' but 'She who has a tent,' and 'A tent is in her'; the 'i' in the second name does not necessarily represent the possessive of the first personal pronoun any more than in 'Oholibamah' (Esau's wife, Gen. xxxvi. 2) or, probably, Hephzi-bah (Isa. lxii. 4). It would seem to be mere accident that the names have the same number of letters as the Hebrew words for Samaria and Jerusalem. 'Tent' refers naturally to the tents on the High Places (xvi. 16). The two names should properly be pronounced Ŏhŏlah and Ohŏlibah, the 'i' having the sound of *ee* in *been*.

they became mine, as Jacob married sisters.

xxiii. 5-10. *The wickedness of Oholah; Assyria.*

played the harlot: cf. xvi. 15, and Isa. i. 21.

the Assyrians her neighbours. Assyria first appears in Israel in the reign of Menahem: 2 Kings xv. 19; cf. Hos. v. 13, vii. 11, xii. 2. It could hardly be called a 'neighbour'; the distance from Samaria to Nineveh, across the desert, is 400 miles; the word might be rendered 'warriors,' or, by a slight change, 'famous'; either sense would suit those terrors of Western Asia.

6. governors and rulers: two words borrowed from the Assyrian, which correspond more nearly to 'satraps and viceroys.' For 'horsemen,' cf. note xvii. 15. A young Palestinian girl might well lose her heart to gorgeous Assyrian 'lifeguardsmen,' every one of whom looked like an officer: cf. verse 15.

7. As in chap. xvi, political 'whoredom' brings religious corruption with it. Cf. the reference in Amos v. 26 to the worship of the Assyrian 'Sakkut' and 'Kewan.'

7 And she bestowed her whoredoms upon them, the choicest men of Assyria all of them: and on whomsoever she doted, with all their idols she defiled herself.
8 Neither hath she left her whoredoms since *the days of* Egypt; for in her youth they lay with her, and they bruised the teats of her virginity: and they poured out
9 their whoredom upon her. Wherefore I delivered her into the hand of her lovers, into the hand of the Assyrians,
10 upon whom she doted. These discovered her nakedness: they took her sons and her daughters, and her they slew with the sword: and she became a byword among
11 women; for they executed judgements upon her. And her sister Oholibah saw this, yet was she more corrupt in her doting than she, and in her whoredoms which were
12 more than the whoredoms of her sister. She doted upon the Assyrians, governors and rulers, *her* neighbours, clothed most gorgeously, horsemen riding upon horses,

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8. the days of Egypt: see notes on xvi. 26, xx. 7. Here the reference is undoubtedly to the bondage in Egypt, since the later political relations of Egypt (after Solomon) were not with the Northern but the Southern Kingdom. See Gen. xxxiv. 2; Lev. xv. 8.

9. For the tragic irony of this verse, cf. xvi. 37. Ezekiel here advances in sternness upon Hosea (ii. 10).

xxiii. 11–21. *The wickedness of Oholibah; Assyria and Babylon.*

11. her sister... saw this: the description implies that Judah's sin was later than that of Israel, and more heinous. The narrative in Kings lays stress on the fact that the wickedness of Israel was unrelieved by reforms such as took place in Judah under Asa and Hezekiah and Josiah; but Ezekiel's language is what we should expect from one whose very love for Judah makes him feel her guilt the more deeply. After the death of Josiah the moral condition of Jerusalem would seem to have been as bad as that of Samaria in her last days.

12. Cf. verse 6. Assyrian intervention in the affairs of Judah dates from Ahaz's invitation to Tiglath-Pileser to attack Syria and Ephraim (2 Kings xvi. 7, and Isa. vii. 17 ff.), and continued through the reign of Hezekiah.

all of them desirable young men. And I saw that she 13
was defiled; they both took one way. And she increased 14
her whoredoms; for she saw men pourtrayed upon the
wall, the images of the Chaldeans pourtrayed with
vermilion, girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding 15
in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes
to look upon, after the likeness of the Babylonians in
Chaldea, the land of their nativity. And as soon as she 16
saw them she doted upon them, and sent messengers
unto them into Chaldea. And the Babylonians came to 17
her into the bed of love, and they defiled her with their
whoredom, and she was polluted with them, and her
soul was alienated from them. So she discovered her 18
whoredoms, and discovered her nakedness: then my

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13. I saw: cf. verses 9, 18. Yahweh sees, but for a time does nothing to mark his displeasure.

14. The feeling that lies beneath passages such as this explains the sterner Hebrew attitude to art. At present, an Oriental woman of good position would never see strange men save in pictures; and though Hebrew women had more freedom, Ezekiel compares Judah's desire for closer acquaintance with Babylon to a wanton girl's desire for a world from which she would naturally be secluded.

15. exceeding in dyed attire: R.V. marg. 'with dyed turbans'; properly, 'with turbans wound round and hanging down.' Babylonian head-dresses with thin strings or fillets are common on the monuments. The word translated 'exceeding' means to spread or sprawl, like the vine in xvii. 6.

princes: the word used here seems to mean 'a third,' perhaps in the chariot with king and charioteer, such as is seen sometimes (though not in battle scenes) on the monuments; perhaps originally the word meant an officer of the third rank ('third lieutenant'), and then was used more generally; it occurs in Exod. xiv. 7.

16. sent messengers. This can hardly be a reference to 2 Kings xx. 12; but our knowledge of the history of Judah in the seventh century is slight.

17. Judah could not be constant, even in sin. Her desires were purely animal.

18. The fullness of the style here, and more especially the repetition of the most scathing expression, are characteristic of Ezekiel.

soul was alienated from her, like as my soul was alienated
19 from her sister. Yet she multiplied her whoredoms,
remembering the days of her youth, wherein she had
20 played the harlot in the land of Egypt. And she doted
upon their paramours, whose flesh is as the flesh of asses,
21 and whose issue is like the issue of horses. Thus thou
calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, in
the bruising of thy teats by the Egyptians for the breasts
of thy youth.

22 Therefore, O Oholibah, thus saith the Lord GOD:
Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from
whom thy soul is alienated, and I will bring them against
23 thee on every side; the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod and Shoa and Koa, *and* all the Assyrians

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After growing tired of Babylon she cast all shame aside; she would form an alliance with any one, even Ammon (xxi. 20). Yahweh's long-suffering is now at an end.

19. the land of Egypt: cf. verse 8. Both Hezekiah and Jehoiakim relied on Egyptian help; Josiah had died fighting against Egypt.

20. paramours. The word is used only here as a masculine. Cf. xvi. 34.

the flesh of asses. Ezekiel here uses proverbial phrases to express his contemptuous loathing.

21. calledst to remembrance: properly, 'didst recall,' or 'look round for,' in order to repeat it.

xxiii. 22-35. *Oholibah's punishment*: cf. verse 9 and xvi. 39. In Hosea's parable the unfaithful wife is to be left desolate for a time, and then, in the desert, to hear comfortable words from her husband. In chap. xvi Yahweh judges her and then leaves her to her quondam lovers; here he simply lets them loose on her (verse 24); while in verse 45 the judgement is pronounced by righteous men, and the same punishment follows. Had Ezekiel lived in modern times he might have referred to the terrible physical results of sexual vice.

22. After the fulfilment of such impure desires the loathing is mutual. Such sin as Judah has indulged and aroused could only have one result; its punishment is not arbitrary but inevitable.

23. the Chaldeans. The name is used in a wider sense than with them: desirable young men, governors and rulers all of them, princes and men of renown, all of them riding upon horses. And they shall come against thee 24 with weapons, chariots, and wagons, and with an assembly of peoples; they shall set themselves against thee with buckler and shield and helmet round about: and I will commit the judgement unto them, and they shall judge thee according to their judgements. And I will set my 25 jealousy against thee, and they shall deal with thee in fury; they shall take away thy nose and thine ears; and thy residue shall fall by the sword: they shall take thy sons and thy daughters; and thy residue shall be devoured by the fire. They shall also strip thee of thy clothes, and 26 take away thy fair jewels. Thus will I make thy lewdness 27 to cease from thee, and thy whoredom *brought* from the land of Egypt: so that thou shalt not lift up thine eyes

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'Babylonians,' and includes the following names; these latter were a riddle to the ancients (the Vulgate renders them by 'noble tyrants and princes'); they have been identified with the Assyrian Gentile names Pukûdu, Sutû and Kutû. Winckler has pointed out that as these peoples do not belong to the Assyrians, the *and*, which the R. V. inserts in italics, should be read in the Hebrew text. The situation of all these peoples was on the borders of Elam, east of Babylonia.

For the last part of the verse cf. verse 12; the 'lovers' now come for a different purpose.

24. weapons: this word does not occur elsewhere; the LXX reads 'from the North.'

25. jealousy: cf. viii. 3, xvi. 38, xxxvi. 5, and Introd. pp. 33 ff. In this context the word is no longer startling; in a Christian dress, the thought takes shape in Whittier's lines:

Thou judgest us: Thy purity
Doth all our lusts condemn:
The love that draws us nearer Thee
Is hot with wrath to them.

thy nose: the punishment awarded by the Egyptians to adulteresses (Diod. Sic., I. 78); Assyrian wall-sculptures bear out all these atrocities, and more.

28 unto them, nor remember Egypt any more. For thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will deliver thee into the hand of them whom thou hatest, into the hand of
29 them from whom thy soul is alienated: and they shall deal with thee in hatred, and shall take away all thy labour, and shall leave thee naked and bare: and the nakedness of thy whoredoms shall be discovered, both
30 thy lewdness and thy whoredoms. These things shall be done unto thee, for that thou hast gone a whoring after the heathen, and because thou art polluted with
31 their idols. Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister;
32 therefore will I give her cup into thine hand. Thus saith the Lord GOD: Thou shalt drink of thy sister's cup, which is deep and large: thou shalt be laughed to
33 scorn and had in derision; it containeth much. Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, with the cup of astonishment and desolation, with the cup of thy
34 sister Samaria. Thou shalt even drink it and drain it out, and thou shalt gnaw the sherds thereof, and shall

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28. whom thou hatest: cf. verses 17, 22; see also note on xvi. 37. Verses 28–30 are in the main a repetition of the thoughts already expressed in verses 22–27, but the expression is too independent to warrant us in putting them down as a gloss or a 'doublet': cf. verses 32, 33, and the general recapitulation in verses 36–49.

31. Cf. verse 11. For the figure of the 'cup,' cf. Jer. xxv. 15; Ps. lxxv. 8; Matt. xxvi. 39; contrast Ps. cxvi. 13 and 1 Cor. x. 16.

32. it containeth much: Kraetzschmar suggests that the 'drunkenness' (or, as he would read, 'overthrow') and 'sorrow' of verse 33 are really the contents which fill the cup itself; such must be the meaning, whether we alter the text or not.

34. A striking description of the brute folly of intoxication (the close companion of sexual impurity). Cf. Dante's description of the punishment of Ugolino and Ruggieri in Hell (*Inf.* xxxii. 124–132), or Browning's scarcely less terrible lines in *The Ring and the Book* ('Caponsacchi,' ll. 1,932 ff.). Note the emphasis in the last clause of the verse.

tear thy breasts: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord
God. Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Because 35
thou hast forgotten me, and cast me behind thy back,
therefore bear thou also thy lewdness and thy whoredoms.

The Lord said moreover unto me: Son of man, wilt 36
thou judge Oholah and Oholibah? then declare unto
them their abominations. For they have committed 37
adultery, and blood is in their hands, and with their
idols have they committed adultery; and they have also
caused their sons, whom they bare unto me, to pass
through *the fire* unto them to be devoured. Moreover 38
this they have done unto me: they have defiled my
sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths. For when they had slain their children to their 39
idols, then they came the same day into my sanctuary to
profane it; and, lo, thus have they done in the midst of
mine house. And furthermore ye have sent for men that 40
come from far: unto whom a messenger was sent, and, lo,

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xxiii. 36-49. *Recapitulation of the sin and punishment of the two sisters.* Smend finds in the parallel references to Oholah and Oholibah another suggestion that the chapter was written after 586 B. C., but the coupling of the still standing Jerusalem with the fallen Samaria has great dramatic and rhetorical force.

36. wilt thou judge? Cf. xx. 4, xxii. 2.

37. The chief pause should be placed after 'hands'; Ezekiel sums up the nation's sins under the two heads of adultery and blood on the one side, idolatry in general and child-sacrifice on the other (cf. xvi. 20).

38. the same day: *lit.* 'that day,' cf. verse 39, v. 11, xx. 13.

40-44. The text of these verses is specially corrupt. The LXX differs considerably, and Kraetzschmar regards the verses as a combination of two parallel passages; no emendations, however, are convincing.

40. ye have sent: the prophet here turns to the two women; but the language changes to the singular, and then to the third person, first in the singular, and then in the plural, as rapidly as the thought. Cf. verse 16.

they came; for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst
41 thine eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments; and
satest upon a stately bed, with a table prepared before it,
whereupon thou didst set mine incense and mine oil.
42 And the voice of a multitude being at ease was with her:
and with men of the common sort were brought drunkards
from the wilderness; and they put bracelets upon the
hands of them *twain*, and beautiful crowns upon their
43 heads. Then said I of her that was old in adulteries,
Now will they commit whoredoms with her, and she
44 *with them*. And they went in unto her, as they go in
unto an harlot: so went they in unto Oholah and unto
45 Oholibah, the lewd women. And righteous men, they
shall judge them with the judgement of adulteresses, and
with the judgement of women that shed blood; because
46 they are adulteresses, and blood is in their hands. For
thus saith the Lord God: I will bring up an assembly
against them, and will give them to be tossed to and fro

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paintedst. The Hebrew verb is connected with the Arabic word which appears in English as *alcohol*; the material used was very fine powder of antimony.

41. Observe **mine incense:** cf. xvi. 18, and note thereon.

42. The utter degradation of Judah, corresponding to verse 18. 'From the wilderness' may refer to embassies of Bedouin tribes asking for alliance in revolting from Nebuchadnezzar. The correction in the margin of the Hebrew text, for 'drunkards,' suggests 'Sabaeans,' which is appropriate to 'wilderness,' and also to the succeeding clauses.

43. If the text is right, the R. V. marg. ('even with her') is preferable to 'and she with them,' though very difficult. But the LXX represents a quite different reading. The first clause seems to mean that, prolonged as Judah's sins of the flesh have been, she will still find partners in her guilt.

45. righteous men: there is here no special reference to the nations. Cf. verse 36, and contrast verse 24.

46. The punishment is not only inevitable; it is simply the sin prolonged. 'Peccatum poena peccati,' again. They are to be forced to fresh prostitution. The same thought is expressed,

and spoiled. And the assembly shall stone them with 47
stones, and despatch them with their swords; they shall
slay their sons and their daughters, and burn up their
houses with fire. Thus will I cause lewdness to cease 48
out of the land, that all women may be taught not to do
after your lewdness. And they shall recompense your 49
lewdness upon you, and ye shall bear the sins of your
idols: and ye shall know that I am the Lord God.

Again, in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the 24

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though less startlingly, in Ps. xviii. 26; Rev. xxii. 11; see also xxiv. 8; and it is certainly true in the physiological realm, where a vicious taste becomes a positive but irremovable torture. For another picture of unpardonable sin, see Milton, *P. L.*, iv. 32-113.

48. all women: the surrounding nations. Righteousness was thus to be enforced by the Jews' punishment, not by their preaching. Contrast the conception of the function of the servant of Yahweh in Isa. xlii, &c. The Jews have been a spectacle—'tossed to and fro'—through the ages; but what Ezekiel expected to be done by the fall of Jerusalem has been done by Calvary.

xxiv. *The last moments before the final crash.* Ezekiel has now completed his 'judgements' of the city, and he learns that at last the siege has commenced—the siege which he knows is not to be raised. Thereupon the old mood of horror at the wickedness and the fate of the city returns upon him, and with it the recollection of that boastful comparison of the city to the caldron which expressed the impious infatuation of the remnant in Jerusalem. He has already given a sombre interpretation to the words; now he carries out the grim jest still further; and yet it is no jest, but the earnestness of fierce moral denunciation of the bloody city (verses 6, 9: cf. xxii. 2, xxiii. 37, 45); concluding with a final word from Yahweh that expresses no anger, but only relentless determination.

Then the message and the mood change. His own wife dies! He is stunned. But as he sits plunged in misery too deep to manifest any of the usual signs of grief, his own prophecies and the city's fate recur to his mind; that blow, when it comes, will be no less terrible, no less paralysing for the whole nation, than the loss of the desire of his eyes has been for him. We are reminded inevitably of Hosea's interpretation of his own tragic married life; did the prophets both find consolation for their own woe in the thought of its wider significance? A man must go

tenth *day* of the month, the word of the LORD came
2 unto me, saying, Son of man, write thee the name of the
day, *even* of this selfsame day: the king of Babylon drew
3 close unto Jerusalem this selfsame day. And utter
a parable unto the rebellious house, and say unto them,
Thus saith the Lord GOD, Set on the caldron, set it on,

through such suffering for himself before he can answer the question. But while Hosea's wife has been as guilty as the nation, Ezekiel (who has never compared the nation to his own wife in chaps. xvi or xxiii) cannot but feel the contrast between the beloved one whom he has lost and the city whose own guilt has been her ruin, the loved sanctuary which Yahweh is forced to profane. Again, Hosea's words throb with his own bursting grief; Ezekiel now speaks with a strange calm. We are half reminded of the mood in which the Scottish Covenanter, James Welwood, spoke on the morning after the death of his wife: 'I declare I have not, all this night, had one thought of the death of my wife, I have been so taken up with heavenly things; I have been this night upon the banks of the Ulai, plucking an apple here and there.'[1] But beneath these quiet, almost hard words, can be heard the set tones of the man who once grew passionate over the woes of his people, but now has no words wherewith to voice his own and his people's grief.[2] No wailing cry over Jerusalem in the Lamentations is more heartrending than this strange dirge for her; nor has deeper grief for her been felt than his who thus united loss of city and of wife in one sorrow—except perhaps, when the Son of Man 'beheld the city and wept over her.'

xxiv. 1–14. *The real significance of the Parable of the Caldron.*

1. Jan. 587 B.C. The same date is given in 2 Kings xxv. 1; Jer. lii. 4. The city was besieged for a year and a half; and no other message is given to Ezekiel during the siege.

2. drew close, or as R.V. marg., 'leaned upon'—a peculiarly vivid way of expressing the investment of the city; 'Nebuchadnezzar leaned his weight upon it.' The same word is used in xxx. 6 for those who 'prop up' the power of Egypt.

This verse forces on us in the clearest fashion the dilemma—either Ezekiel was a deliberate deceiver, or he was possessed of some kind of second sight.

3. the caldron: cf. xi. 3, and note *ad loc.*

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[1] Patrick Walker, *Lives of the Covenanters.*

[2] Compare Dr. John Brown's account of his father's conduct in a like bereavement (*Letter to Dr. John Cairns*).

and also pour water into it: gather the pieces thereof 4
into it, even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder;
fill it with the choice bones. Take the choice of the 5
flock, and pile also the bones under it: make it boil
well; yea, let the bones thereof be seethed in the midst
of it.

Wherefore thus saith the Lord God: Woe to the 6
bloody city, to the caldron whose rust is therein, and
whose rust is not gone out of it! bring it out piece by
piece; no lot is fallen upon it. For her blood is in the 7
midst of her; she set it upon the bare rock; she poured
it not upon the ground, to cover it with dust; that it 8
might cause fury to come up to take vengeance, I have
set her blood upon the bare rock, that it should not be
covered. Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Woe to 9
the bloody city! I also will make the pile great. Heap 10
on the wood, make the fire hot, boil well the flesh, and
make thick the broth, and let the bones be burned.
Then set it empty upon the coals thereof, that it may be 11
hot, and the brass thereof may burn, and that the

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4. choice bones, the leaders in Jerusalem; the irony is worth noting.

5. the bones . . . seethed: a vivid reference to the heat of the Chaldaean attack; in verse 10 'the bones are actually burnt.'

6. piece by piece: i. e. at random, without 'standing on the order' of the removal of the princes (verse 7). The rust is the blood of the murders in Jerusalem. Hence, also, 'no lot is fallen upon it,' i. e. no settled order (for destruction) is arranged.

7. upon the bare rock: she is unashamed, and therefore (verse 8) unforgiven.

to cover it: while still uncovered spilt blood cries for vengeance: cf. Gen. iv. 10; Job xvi. 18; Heb. xii. 24.

8. I have set. Yahweh, as it were, 'fixes' the blood-stain The first person is continued in verse 9.

10. bones . . . burned. See note on verse 5.

11. Observe the dramatic suddenness of 'empty'; the position of the word is still more emphatic in the Hebrew; nor is there

filthiness of it may be molten in it, that the rust of it
12 may be consumed. She hath wearied *herself* with toil:
yet her great rust goeth not forth out of her; her rust
13 *goeth not forth* by fire. In thy filthiness is lewdness:
because I have purged thee and thou wast not purged,
thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more,
14 till I have satisfied my fury upon thee. I the LORD have
spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will
not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent;
according to thy ways, and according to thy doings, shall
they judge thee, saith the Lord GOD.

15, 16 Also the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son
of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of
thine eyes with a stroke: yet neither shalt thou mourn

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anything in the Hebrew to correspond to the change of gender ('her' to 'it') in the English versions. For 'brass' cf. note on xxvii. 13.

12. herself: better, 'me,' as R.V. margin. The Jerusalemites in chap. xi do not think of the rust; to Yahweh that is the main thing; he has tried to get rid of it before; now there remains nothing but to destroy the caldron (verse 13): cf. Jer. xiii. 27. In the Hebrew the clause is very similar to the last clause of verse 11, and the LXX, apparently regarding the two clauses as identical, has omitted the words in verse 12.

14. To the close of this verse the LXX adds, 'Wherefore I will judge thee according to thy bloody deeds, and according to thy thoughts will I judge thee, thou that art a by-word for uncleanness and fruitful in rebellion.' The words are quite characteristic of Ezekiel, and if we may assume two recensions of the text, they may very well have appeared in one and been absent in the other.

xxiv. 15-27. *The end. The Prophet's bereavement and the People's desolation.*

16. Ezekiel is too reticent to allow of a full interpretation of his experience. He learns, however, that he will lose his wife (perhaps she has been already ill; in any case, the end is to come suddenly, 'at a blow'); and he foresees that his grief will be stupefying.

nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Sigh, but 17
not aloud; make no mourning for the dead, bind thy
headtire upon thee, and put thy shoes upon thy feet,
and cover not thy lips, and eat not the bread of men.
So I spake unto the people in the morning; and at even 18
my wife died: and I did in the morning as I was
commanded. And the people said unto me, Wilt thou 19
not tell us what these things are to us, that thou doest
so? Then I said unto them, The word of the LORD 20
came unto me, saying, Speak unto the house of Israel, 21
Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will profane my
sanctuary, the pride of your power, the desire of your
eyes, and that which your soul pitieth; and your sons
and your daughters whom ye have left behind shall fall
by the sword. And ye shall do as I have done: ye shall 22
not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. And 23
your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes
upon your feet: ye shall not mourn nor weep; but ye

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17. The general signs of mourning were to loose the turban, ake off the shoes, cut the beard, and eat 'mourning bread' (peraps a reminiscence of sacrificial meals for the dead): cf. 2 Sam. ii. 20. Ezekiel will not make the customary sign of silence 1 mourning, nor eat the usual 'funeral food.' Cf. Jer. xvi. 7; lso Mic. iii. 7, and Lev. xiii. 45.

18. On one morning he tells the people what he has learnt; n the evening his wife dies; next morning no customary signs f grief are shown by the bereaved husband. The LXX strangely mits the mention of the death of the wife.

19. As in the case of the other acts of the prophet, the people eel there must be some significance therein for themselves.

21. In chap. xvi the nation is compared to Yahweh's wife; ere the city and temple are spoken of as being as dear to the ation as was his own wife to Ezekiel.

whom ye have left behind: a valuable side-light on the haracter of the first deportation.

22, 23. Here Ezekiel speaks in his own person. 'When the ty falls, your grief will be as great as mine is now; you too will t like men turned to stone.' Cf. Isa. xlvii. 5.

shall pine away in your iniquities, and moan one toward
24 another. Thus shall Ezekiel be unto you a sign;
according to all that he hath done shall ye do: when
this cometh, then shall ye know that I am the Lord GOD.

25 And thou, son of man, shall it not be in the day when
I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory,
the desire of their eyes, and that whereupon they set
26 their heart, their sons and their daughters, that in that
day he that escapeth shall come unto thee, to cause thee
27 to hear it with thine ears? In that day shall thy mouth
be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt
speak, and be no more dumb: so shalt thou be a sign
unto them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

25 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son

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23. pine away: at this point the analogy between Ezekiel's grief and the nation's ceases. The latter will include the bitterness of a guilty conscience—an actual consciousness of sin. Cf. xxxiii. 10; the same Hebrew word is used in Isa. xxxiv. 4 (of stars) and Ps. xxxviii. 6 (of tumours).

moan. This does not really contradict the previous part of the verse; like Ezekiel, the exiles will be silent (cf. verse 17), as far as the loud wailing cry is concerned; but their grief will find vent in low groans of anguish. The meaning of the word is illustrated by Prov. xix. 12, xx. 2, xxviii. 15; Isa. v. 30; more nearly in Prov. v. 11. LXX has, instead, 'ye shall comfort each his brother.'

24. In this verse Yahweh is again the speaker.

25. Note the warmth of the terms here used: cf. verse 21.

26. See on xxxiii. 21.

27. to him: better, as R.V. marg. 'together with him.' 'To him' implies that Ezekiel had been actually speechless, which is not the case; see note on xxxii. 6. When his predictions are verified the 'dumbness' which had prevented all public utterance will be removed.

There is no peroration, save the already familiar phrase; Israel will see in all this the revelation of Yahweh.

PART II.

DIVISION I. THE FALL OF THE NATIONS (xxv–xxxii).

With chap. xxiv (the investment of the city) the first half of of man, set thy face toward the children of Ammon, and

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Ezekiel's prophecy, the 'pars destruens' is at an end. Two years later the news of the fall of Jerusalem reaches Tel-abib, and Ezekiel commences a new series of prophecies to Israel (chap. xxxiii). The intervening prophecies were delivered at various times (cf. xxvi. 1, xxix. 1, 17, xxx. 20, xxxi. 1, xxxii. 1, 17), but they are here naturally grouped together. They form a real unity, as dealing with the neighbours of Israel, first in a narrower (chap. xxv) and then in a wider sense (chaps. xxvi–xxxii), on whose fortunes her own must, humanly speaking, depend; their fall 'clears the way' for that new order of things which, when the barbarian invaders from the north have been destroyed (chaps. xxxviii and xxxix), will leave Israel undisturbed to worship Yahweh. Amos (more symmetrically even than Ezekiel), Isaiah, and Jeremiah contain sections dealing with the 'nations'; in each case the utterance of natural hatred and national hostility is combined with that of moral reprobation; peculiar to Ezekiel is the tone of mingled awe and exultation, which is also one of the glories of the choruses of Aeschylus. To Ezekiel the real guilt of the nations is what Aeschylus called 'hybris,' insulting pride. They had dared to set themselves in the place of Him who was the God of the whole earth, and to be, in another sense from Rom. ii. 14, a 'law unto themselves.' The only direct mention of a special sin against Yahweh's people is in connexion with Edom (xxv. 12, xxxv. 5). Their destruction, however, is Israel's peace. Ezekiel's immediate successor had wider views; but how far revelation had to travel before the apostle of the Gentiles learnt that the casting away of Israel was the reconciling of the world! (Rom. xi. 15.)

On the question of the actual fulfilment of these prophecies, see Introd., pp. 21 ff. It is not without significance that the nations referred to are seven in number. The four neighbouring peoples are first dealt with briefly; then comes a collection of longer prophecies against Tyre (with an appendix on Sodom and a glimpse of the future return of Israel); and another collection of prophecies on Egypt, with a further prophecy relating to Tyre (see notes on xxix. 17–20). The whole section concludes with a remarkable picture of the gathering of all the nations in Sheol. A further attack on Edom (chap. xxxv) occurs in the succeeding section (see notes *ad loc.*). This section is noteworthy as containing three passages which relate to subjects rarely alluded to in the rest of the O. T.—the commerce of Tyre, the Cherub in Eden, and the Land of the Dead (see notes on xxvii, xxviii. 11–19, and xxxii). The passages are the more interesting since, though obscure to us because of the rigid methods of selection which have governed the formation of the O. T. canon, they refer to what must have been familiar regions of Jewish thought.

3 prophesy against them: and say unto the children of Ammon, Hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was made desolate; and against the
4 house of Judah, when they went into captivity: therefore behold, I will deliver thee to the children of the east for a possession, and they shall set their encampments in thee, and make their dwellings in thee; they shall eat
5 thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk. And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the children of Ammon a couching place for flocks: and ye shall know
6 that I am the LORD. For thus saith the Lord GOD:

SECTION I. ORACLES AGAINST THE FOUR NEIGHBOURS OF JUDAH (XXV).

These are Ammon, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines. There is no evidence for the date of this chapter, save that it is evidently later than the fall of Jerusalem.

xxv. 1-7. *On Ammon.* See xxi. 28-32; Zeph. ii. 8-11; Jer. xlix. 1-6; Edom, Ammon, and Moab were closely connected in race with the Hebrews; their language was almost identical (as is shown by the inscription of the Moabite king Mesha), and their religious cultus was also similar (to judge from the remains of the Edomite sanctuary at Petra). They were in constant conflict with Israel, subdued by the stronger monarchs, and then reasserting their independence. All three states coquetted with the Assyrian and Chaldaean invaders, and were left as flotsam in their territories east of the Jordan after the exile of the Jews (cf. verse 3).

2. Ammon: the most northerly of the three states. See Map.

3. profaned. Cf. note on vii. 22; and Jer. xl. 14, xlix. 1.

4. children of the east, the Bedouin nomads, who are thus to punish the once nomadic Ammonites 'in their own coin.'

encampments: the stone ring within which the Bedouin tents are pitched. Josephus (*Ant.* x. 9. 7) says that in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Moab and Ammon; the desert tribes would then find the survivors of Ammon an easy prey.

5. Rabbah: see note on xxi. 20.

6. Cf. verse 8. This 'Schadenfreude' in her neighbours the Jews could never forget.

Because thou hast clapped thine hands, and stamped
with the feet, and rejoiced with all the despite of thy
soul against the land of Israel; therefore behold, I have 7
stretched out mine hand upon thee, and will deliver thee
for a spoil to the nations; and I will cut thee off from
the peoples, and I will cause thee to perish out of the
countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that
I am the LORD.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because that Moab and 8
Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all
the nations; therefore behold, I will open the side of 9
Moab from the cities, from his cities which are on his
frontiers, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-
meon, and Kiriathaim, unto the children of the east, *to* 10
go against the children of Ammon, and I will give them
for a possession, that the children of Ammon may not be
remembered among the nations: and I will execute 11
judgements upon Moab; and they shall know that I am
he LORD.

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7. Jeremiah (xlix. 6) foretells a restoration for Ammon; Ezekiel iolds out no hope: cf. verse 10.

xxv. 8–11. *On Moab.* The Moabite country lay east of the Jead Sea: cf. G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land* p. 48, 53, 548, for this region.

8. Seir, or Edom, out of place here, and omitted in LXX.

9. Baal-meon is mentioned in Mesha's inscription; so is iriathaim. The latter previously belonged to Reuben; it is perhaps o be identified with Kurêjât (Num. xxxii. 37: cf. Jer. xlviii. 1). s these cities are all north of the Arnon, and as the doom of Ioab is not complete, Ezekiel seems to suggest that in the future Ioab's territories would be confined to the south of the Arnon.

xxv. 12–14. *On Edom*; the southernmost of the three states: dom is referred to in the O. T. with peculiar hostility (cf. Obad. o–14), just as she was, as suggested by the account of her descent om Esau, more nearly allied to Israel than either Ammon or Ioab. Consanguinity always makes hate the keener. She alone is ngled out for mention in connexion with the promises to Israel, in

12 Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon
13 them; therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, I will stretch out mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it: and I will make it desolate from Teman;
14 even unto Dedan shall they fall by the sword. And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel; and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury: and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord GOD.

15 Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with
16 despite of soul to destroy it with perpetual enmity; therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the

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chap. xxxv. She had stood by the Chaldaeans in the war (as Judah had been bidden to do), and had gloried in the advantage it gave her (cf. xxxii. 29; Jer. xxv. 21, xxvii. 3; also Deut. xxiii. 7; 2 Kings iii. 9; Isa. lxiii. 1; 2 Chron. xx. 10). The Herods were Idumaeans or Edomites.

13. Teman: cf. xx. 46. The northern district of Edom, used in Amos i. 12 for Edom itself; its inhabitants being proverbial for their wisdom; Jer. xlix. 7: cf. Job vi. 19. Eliphaz was a Temanite.

Dedan, an Arabian tribe dwelling on the southern borders of Edom (Isa. xxi. 13; Jer. xxv. 23). See xxvii. 15, 20.

14. Edom, unlike the others, is to be punished by God and Israel together.

xxv. 15–17. *On the Philistines*; a people dwelling on the seacoast of Palestine (verse 16), of unknown origin, but believed by several to be invaders from the west, possibly from Crete, whose civilization stretches back to the third millennium before Christ. In the Prophetic Books the LXX renders 'Cerethites' by 'Cretans.' The narratives in Samuel suggest a rather high level of political organization among the Philistine 'cities.' After long-continued hostility, we find the Philistines and Hezekiah joined in a common enmity to Assyria. They were extinguished under the Hasmonaeans. Notice the vagueness with which their doom is foretold.

Cherethites, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast.
And I will execute great vengeance upon them with 17
furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the LORD,
when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.
And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first 26

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16. Cherethites: members of this Philistine tribe formed part of David's bodyguard (2 Sam. viii. 18; the name of their comrades, the Pelethites, also suggests a Philistine origin). There is here a grim play on the words *Cherethites*, and *hikratti*, 'I will cut off.'

17. great vengeance: cf. verse 14. It is hardly fair to say with Toy that 'Ezekiel's attitude to all these peoples is determined not by religious or moral but by political considerations.' Ezekiel writes as a Jew, i. e. as one who identifies Yahweh's antipathies with his own; to him a nation which hated Judah hated Yahweh; the moral and the political could not be dissociated.

SECTION II. ORACLES AGAINST TYRE AND SIDON (xxvi–xxviii).

xxvi. *The Attack of Nebuchadnezzar upon Tyre* (verses 1–14), *and Tyre's subsequent fate* (verses 15–21). Tyre was the Venice of antiquity; each city was built on an island (Tyre means 'rock') just off the mainland; the policy of each was frankly and consistently commercial, but welcomed political influence for the sake of commercial supremacy. Tyre was the younger rival of Sidon, but early made herself paramount and pursued a bolder policy (Isa. xxiii. 3), which was stimulated by rivalry with the Greeks, 'the intruders' on her 'ancient home.' Her relations with Israel were friendly from the time of David onwards. She had joined in a league with Zedekiah and others against Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xxvii. 3); Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Tyre lasted, according to Josephus, thirteen years; in the end Nebuchadnezzar was obliged to retire (as was Alexander subsequently); but Tyre apparently acknowledged his suzerainty. Herodotus (ii. 161) and Diodorus Siculus (i. 68) recount an attack of Hophra on Tyre or Phoenicia, presumably as being a dependency of Nebuchadnezzar. Under the Seleucids, her territory extended to Kadesh in Galilee and Carmel.

Ezekiel's prophecies on Tyre possess great literary power and variety. Tyre, like Egypt, struck his imagination; he fancied that he saw all the cosmopolitan grandeur of Tyre falling into the hungry waves of the sea which had been her strength and pride. This forecast, however, was not fulfilled (see note on xxix. 18 and Introd., p. 22), as Ezekiel later on acknowledged. The form of

day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto
2 me, saying, Son of man, because that Tyre hath said
against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken *that was* the gate
of the peoples; she is turned unto me: I shall be
3 replenished, now that she is laid waste: therefore thus
saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against thee, O Tyre,
and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as

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the prophecy is almost entirely poetical, the rhythm being most sustained and elaborate in the 'ship' simile in chap. xxvii. The whole passage has prefixed to it the date 586 B.C., the year of Jerusalem's fall; it is written, apparently, shortly before the beginning of the siege of Tyre. The 'supplementary' prophecy in chap. xxix is dated 570 B.C. Ezekiel's hatred of Tyre had a double basis. With his intense antipathy to commerce and luxury, he naturally hated the nation which stood for both in the ancient world—the pride of Tyre was essentially impious. As one of the most determined opponents of Nebuchadnezzar, and the instigator of revolt in Palestine, Tyre was to him the opponent of Yahweh's will. See Rawlinson's *Phoenicia*, chap. ix.

As the concrete type of irreligious commercialism, the 'world,' as it is often called in the Johannine writings, 'Babylon' in Rev. xvii, xviii constantly reminds the reader of Ezekiel's picture of Tyre. The biblical spirit is strikingly illustrated in Ruskin's words (*Stones of Venice*, i. 1): 'We read (the prophecies) as a lovely song, and close our ears to the sternness of their warning; for the very depth of the fall of Tyre has blinded us to its reality, and we forget, as we watch the bleaching of the rocks between the sunshine and the sea, that they were once "as in Eden, the Garden of God."' Cf. also Newman's lines in *Lyra Apostolica*.

1. the eleventh year: cf. Jer. lii. 6, 12. The month is wanting. From the coincidence of the year of this prophecy with that of the arrival of the news that Jerusalem had fallen, however, we may gather that this event suggested to Ezekiel the fall of the mighty city of the seas. As he learns of Jerusalem's fall in the tenth month (xxxiii. 21 note), this prophecy will presumably date from the end of the year, i. e. March 585.

2. Aha: cf. xxv. 3. Judah was the gate through which the produce of the south would reach Tyre. Solomon's wealth was due, it would seem, in large measure to his commercial alliance with Tyre.

3. many nations, in the train of Nebuchadnezzar; see verse 7.

the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall 4
destroy the walls of Tyre, and break down her towers: I
will also scrape her dust from her, and make her a bare
rock. She shall be a place for the spreading of nets in 5
the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the
Lord God: and she shall become a spoil to the nations.
And her daughters which are in the field shall be slain 6
with the sword: and they shall know that I am the Lord.
For thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will bring upon 7
Tyre Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, king of kings,
from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with
horsemen, and a company, and much people. He shall 8
slay with the sword thy daughters in the field: and he
shall make forts against thee, and cast up a mount against
thee, and raise up the buckler against thee. And he 9
shall set his battering engines against thy walls, and with
his axes he shall break down thy towers. By reason of 10

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the sea. All through these chapters the prophet seems to hear the waves beating upon the doomed city.

4. I will also scrape: by some convulsion of nature; earthquake and inundation were not unknown in Tyre.

5. Cf. xlvii. 10.

6. daughters: dependent towns on the mainland—like Mestre, Verona, &c., under Venice. Cf. xvi. 46.

7. Nebuchadrezzar: the correct form of the name (Babylonian) *Nabu-kudurri-uçur*, 'may Nebo protect my labour'. The spelling with *n* instead of *r* only occurs in the later Hebrew books.

from the north: the road from Babylon would approach Tyre *via* Riblah (where Nebuchadnezzar's head quarters were), NNE. of Tyre.

8. forts. Assyrian and Babylonian monuments are full of the elaborate siege operations which made their armies the terror of walled cities. The *buckler* is probably not what the Romans called the 'tortoise,' a penthouse of locked shields used by the assailants of a wall or gate; but a large wicker shield, such as is represented in pictures of sieges. Nebuchadnezzar, unlike Alexander, had no fleet.

the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wagons, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a
11 breach. With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets: he shall slay thy people with the sword, and the pillars of thy strength shall go down to the ground.
12 And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the
13 waters. And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease;
14 and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard. And I will make thee a bare rock: thou shalt be a place for the spreading of nets; thou shalt be built no more: for I the LORD have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

15 Thus saith the Lord GOD to Tyre: Shall not the isles

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10. horses would be as strange in Tyre as in Venice. For the description of a Chaldaean siege, cf. xxiii. 24.

11. pillars: Herodotus (ii. 44) says that Melkarth was honoured with two pillars in Tyre. The pillar or obelisk was characteristic of Semitic worship: cf. 'Jachin and Boaz,' 1 Kings vii. 21, and Ezek. xl. 49, xlii. 6.

14. Ezekiel evidently expects the complete overthrow of Tyre; and Nebuchadnezzar's power and determination certainly made this seem far from improbable. The author of Isa. xxiii. 15 predicts the restoration of Tyre after seventy years.

xxvi. 15–21. The prophet now sees the ruin of the city and the consternation of the countries with which she had traded, and he pictures her descent into the underworld. The first of these subjects is elaborated with astonishing detail in chap. xxvii.

Kraetzschmar has suggested that verses 19–21 should immediately follow verse 6, and precede the account of Nebuchadnezzar's siege; but there is no real opposition between the two; the act of Yahweh is regarded as the final statement of the fate inflicted by the king of Babylon. The theory of Manchot, that verses 7–14 refer to the siege of Tyre by Antigonus, 315–313 B.C., illustrates the danger of purely documentary criticism.

15. isles: the coast and maritime states, which are here re-

shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded groan,
when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee? Then 16
all the princes of the sea shall come down from
their thrones, and lay aside their robes, and strip off their
broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with
trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall
tremble every moment, and be astonished at thee. And 17
they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee,
How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring
men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she
and her inhabitants, which caused their terror to be on all
that haunt it! Now shall the isles tremble in the day of 18
thy fall; yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be dismayed at thy departure. For thus saith the Lord God: 19
When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities
that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep
upon thee, and the great waters shall cover thee; then 20
will I bring thee down with them that descend into the
pit, to the people of old time, and will make thee to dwell
in the nether parts of the earth, in the places that are
desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that
thou be not inhabited; and I will set glory in the land

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garded as in full sympathy with Tyre, as they were united to her by close commercial ties. In the second part of Isaiah the 'isles' are the coast-lands in the west, little known to the non-maritime Hebrews till after the exile.

17. How: the usual word for the beginning of a lamentation: cf. Lam. i. 1. The 'Qinah' metre is clear in these two verses.

19. the deep: the vast ocean, out of which the land had risen, and which was again to engulf it. The word is connected with the Babylonian Tiamat, the name of the monster whose slaughter is narrated in the creation-tablets.

20. The whole city is to descend to the underworld, 'Sheol,' which is here, as in chap. xxxii, regarded as the home of departed nations rather than merely of individuals. See p. 245.

I will set glory: this is certainly wrong; nor is the marginal

21 of the living: I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord GOD.

27 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,
2 And thou, son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyre;
3 and say unto Tyre, O thou that dwellest at the entry of the sea, which art the merchant of the peoples unto many isles, thus saith the Lord GOD: Thou, O Tyre, hast said,
4 I am perfect in beauty. Thy borders are in the heart of
5 the seas, thy builders have perfected thy beauty. They

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insertion of the negative any improvement. A slight alteration, suggested also by the LXX, would give 'so that thou shalt not remain in the land of the living.' In the Assyrian Ishtar-Epos, the underworld is described as 'the region of those whose bread is dust, whose food is mud, who see not the light, who dwell in darkness, and who are clothed like birds in apparel of feathers.'

xxvii. This chapter contains two separate sections, the figure of the shipwreck of Tyre, and a remarkably full catalogue of the city's commerce; the second (9^b–25) is wedged in between the two halves of the first, its insertion being apparently suggested by the description of the furnishing of the ship. The rhythm of the 'ship' passages is in the 'Qinah' throughout, and broken by the catalogue; on the other hand, as both Davidson and Kraetzschmar feel, the catalogue, containing the wares with which the nations lade the ship, is not out of place, and is quite in Ezekiel's manner. The allegory shows great literary skill; but there is not a word which helps us to picture what Tyre was like; rising right out of the sea, she must have been almost as impressive as Venice. The catalogue is one of our best sources for the commerce of Phoenicia, and shows that Ezekiel possessed a remarkably detailed knowledge of Tyre, as of Egypt. See Map.

1. The word of the LORD: the 'lament' is attributed to the direct inspiration of Yahweh, as is the sword-song (chap. xxi) and also the dirge over the princes of Judah (chap. xix).

3. entry. Hebrew as R. V. marg. has the plural—either as the point both of arrival and of departure, or as having two harbours, named the 'Sidonian' and the 'Egyptian.'

I am perfect in beauty. Wellhausen conjectured 'I am a ship' as introducing the allegory; but the comparison is Ezekiel's, the triumphant pride is Tyre's.

4. The 'vase of Aristonothos,' supposed to belong to the seventh

have made all thy planks of fir trees from Senir: they have taken cedars from Lebanon to make a mast for thee. Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars; they 6
have made thy benches of ivory inlaid in boxwood, from the isles of Kittim. Of fine linen with broidered work 7
from Egypt was thy sail, that it might be to thee for an ensign; blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was thine awning. The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad 8
were thy rowers: thy wise men, O Tyre, were in thee, they were thy pilots. The ancients of Gebal and the 9
wise men thereof were in thee thy calkers: all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to occupy thy

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century, depicts two ships with armed warriors standing on the decks while the rowers sit beneath; a century after this prophecy was delivered the battle of Salamis was fought.

5. fir trees should be 'cypresses.'

Senir, the Amorite name for Hermon (Deut. iii. 9).

6. Bashan, the open country east of the Jordan, famous for its large trees and its pasture land.

benches, as R. V. marg., 'deck,' to which also the description seems more applicable.

Kittim, here used for Cyprus, where was the Phoenician colony Kittim. Horace speaks of 'Cyprian beams' for ships.

7. The sail itself served as an ensign, flags not being used on the ancient ship, which generally had one sail and one mast. The word rendered awning should perhaps be 'cabin' (Davidson and Toy), or simply 'deck.'

Elishah. Greece, Sicily, and Italy have been suggested for this locality. Dido's other name, Elissa, would suggest Carthage, or perhaps, more generally, the North African coast-land. Racial and commercial ties between Carthage and Tyre were close.

8. Zidon was now the vassal of Tyre.

Arvad is an island town founded by Sidonian fugitives, north of Tripoli, now *Ruwâd.*

9. ancients, parallel to 'wise men' in verse 8. The councillors of Tyre itself and of the allied cities are summoned to guide the fortunes of the mighty vessel.

Gebal is the Greek Byblos, between Tripoli and Beirout.

With the second clause of this verse begins the catalogue of Tyre's commerce, introduced by a list of her mercenaries (verses 10, 11). The figure is abruptly dropped; instead of the wise men

10 merchandise. Persia and Lud and Put were in thine
army, thy men of war: they hanged the shield and helmet
11 in thee; they set forth thy comeliness. The men of
Arvad with thine army were upon thy walls round about,
and the Gammadim were in thy towers: they hanged
their shields upon thy walls round about; they have
12 perfected thy beauty. Tarshish was thy merchant by
reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with
silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded for thy wares.

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being in the ship, we now have the ships of all lands in the harbour of Tyre. The effect in the following verses is very similar to that of some of Whitman's boldest 'catalogue' passages. Cf. also the list of ships in the second book of the *Iliad.*

occupy: cf. verse 27 (R. V. marg., 'exchange'). Cf. Luke xix. 13 (A. V.), 'occupy till I come,' i. e. trade.

10. Persia is here first mentioned in the O. T.; difficulty has been felt in Tyre's obtaining mercenaries from what was still an obscure tribe far to the east; but it is hardly safe to alter Persia to Cush (Ethiopia), with Toy. Others have suggested a tribe of Pharusii, in North Africa. Lud and Put are often mentioned together, but in Gen. x (with which this list has distinct affinities) Lud is Semitic and Put Hamitic (the Persians belonged to the Aryan stock); Lud would most naturally be identified with the Lydians, who also appear as Egyptian auxiliaries, though the Lubdi, a people situated between the Upper Tigris and the Euphrates, have been suggested. Put appears in Egyptian as Punt, on the western coast of the Red Sea. In any case, the three names would suggest distant barbarians.

in thee, on thy walls: cf. verse 11.

11. with thine army. The Hebrew reads 'and thine army'; a second proper name is required; Cilicia and Chalcis have been suggested; the alteration would be easy.

Gammadim. As alternatives for this name 'Cimmerians' (Cappadocians) and 'also the Medes' have been offered; but a tribe of this name existed in Southern Phoenicia; LXX reads 'guards.'

12. With this verse begins the actual list of articles of trade. Productions of Tyre itself are not referred to. Tarshish is probably a mining region in Southern Spain; it stands for the farthest west as Gog for the farthest north; its 'riches' are naturally metals (cf. Jer. x. 9); a 'ship of Tarshish' will thus be a ship equal to the long voyage down the Mediterranean, as we speak of an 'East Indiaman.'

Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy traffickers: they 13
traded the persons of men and vessels of brass for thy
merchandise. They of the house of Togarmah traded 14
for thy wares with horses and war-horses and mules. The 15
men of Dedan were thy traffickers: many isles were the
mart of thine hand: they brought thee in exchange horns
of ivory and ebony. Syria was thy merchant by reason 16
of the multitude of thy handyworks: they traded for thy
wares with emeralds, purple, and broidered work, and fine
linen, and coral, and rubies. Judah, and the land of Israel, 17
they were thy traffickers: they traded for thy merchandise
wheat of Minnith, and pannag, and honey, and oil, and

Javan: named with Tubal and Meshech in Gen. x. 2. The name is the Hebrew form for Ionians, standing for the Greeks of Asia Minor and the islands, known in the East long before the inhabitants of Greece proper.

Tubal: the Tibarenes, dwelling from the Black Sea to Cilicia; Sargon gave a daughter of his to their king. In xxxviii. 2, Gog is prince of Meshech and Tubal.

Meshech: the Moschi, east of 'Tubal.' Their territory is still rich in copper. This reference to the slave trade is noteworthy: cf. Rev. xviii. 13.

brass, the Hebrew word, which appears in the name 'Nehushton' (2 Kings xviii. 4), means copper and also bronze (the alloy of copper and tin), used in the East earlier than iron. Brass (the alloy of copper and zinc) was not known in antiquity.

14. Togarmah is Armenia, which Herodotus notes as being rich in horses and mules (I. 194). The two words for horses denote draught-horses and riding-horses.

15. Dedan: also mentioned in verse 19. Why twice? LXX, with a small change, reads 'Rhodes.' For Dedan, see note on xxv. 13.

16. Syria is referred to again in verse 18 (Damascus); hence the reading suggested by the LXX, 'Edom,' may be right.

coral should probably be pearls; corals were brought from the Persian Gulf, pearls from the Indian Ocean. The Greek translators had lost the key both to this word and to that used for 'rubies.'

17. In this general survey of world commerce Judah and Israel take their place (an unimportant one) with other nations.

Minnith is an Ammonite town mentioned in Judith xi. 3.

men of war, that are in thee, with all thy company which
is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the heart of the seas
28 in the day of thy ruin. At the sound of the cry of thy
29 pilots the suburbs shall shake. And all that handle the
oar, the mariners, *and* all the pilots of the sea, shall come
30 down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land, and
shall cause their voice to be heard over thee, and shall cry
bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they
31 shall wallow themselves in the ashes: and they shall make
themselves bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth,
and they shall weep for thee in bitterness of soul with
32 bitter mourning. And in their wailing they shall take up
a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, *saying*, Who
is there like Tyre, like her that is brought to silence in
33 the midst of the sea? When thy wares went forth out of
the seas, thou filledst many peoples; thou didst enrich
the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches
34 and of thy merchandise. In the time that thou wast
broken by the seas in the depths of the waters, thy
merchandise and all thy company did fall in the midst of

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28. suburbs: properly, the word means common pasture-land; it is used in xlv. 2 and xlviii. 15 for the space round the temple and the land round the city; elsewhere (Lev. xxv. 34 and Num. xxxv. 2), for the land surrounding Levitical cities. This sense seems hardly applicable here. Jerome translates 'fleets'; probably Ezekiel uses the word, by analogy, for Tyre's dependent coast-lands.

29. After the shipwreck of Tyre the sailors themselves take refuge on the land.

30. Cf. xxvi. 16.

32. their wailing. The word as it stands is unintelligible and rhythmically superfluous; the LXX, with change of one vowel, reads, 'their sons shall take up a lamentation,' &c.

34. In the time that, &c. The Hebrew text is here grammatically indefensible; the R. V. marg. 'now thou art broken' is probably right.

thee. All the inhabitants of the isles are astonished at 35
thee, and their kings are horribly afraid, they are troubled
in their countenance. The merchants among the peoples 36
hiss at thee; thou art become a terror, and thou shalt
never be any more.

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, 28
Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyre, Thus saith the 2
Lord GOD: Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou
hast said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the
midst of the seas; yet thou art man, and not God, though
thou didst set thine heart as the heart of God: behold, 3
thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they
can hide from thee: by thy wisdom and by thine 4
understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast

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35. astonished: better, amazed or confounded: cf. Isa. lii. 14; they do not know what to 'make of' such a calamity. The merchants (verse 36), however, exult over the fall of their great rival.

36. terror: i. e. a terrifying example of destruction. This figure of the mighty and over-laden ship, proudly venturing out into the waters which are to be her ruin, is the most striking example in the Bible of the thought familiar to Hebrews and Greeks alike—that pride prepares the way for its own fall. The popular side of the belief is well illustrated in Herodotus's story of the ring of Polycrates (III. 39 ff.). The religious side finds its highest expression in the Magnificat.

xxviii. 1–10. Ezekiel now turns directly to the 'Prince of Tyre,' as representing the city's spirit of proud self-confidence, and foretells his miserable end. The fates of king and city are naturally regarded as closely connected. Cf. Dan. iv. 10 ff.

2. prince. Ithobaal II; his one great fault is that he thinks himself God. No reference is made, either in his case or 'Pharaoh's,' to what would lie outside Ezekiel's knowledge, viz. the king's private character. The words are not to be pressed literally; Semitic princes did not, like Alexander or the Caesars, regard themselves as divinities.

the midst of the seas. Cf. xxvii. 2.

3. Daniel: cf. xiv. 14. There, his piety is referred to as typical; here, his wisdom.

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28 in the day of thy ruin. At the sound of the cry of thy
29 pilots the suburbs shall shake. And all that handle the oar, the mariners, *and* all the pilots of the sea, shall come
30 down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land, and shall cause their voice to be heard over thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they
31 shall wallow themselves in the ashes: and they shall make themselves bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee in bitterness of soul with
32 bitter mourning. And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, *saying*, Who is there like Tyre, like her that is brought to silence in
33 the midst of the sea? When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many peoples; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches
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the midst of the seas. Cf. xxvii. 2.

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5 gotten gold and silver into thy treasures: by thy great wisdom *and* by thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches,
6 and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches: therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Because thou hast set
7 thine heart as the heart of God; therefore behold, I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of
8 thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. They shall bring thee down to the pit; and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain, in the heart of the seas.
9 Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou art man, and not God, in the hand of him that
10 woundeth thee. Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

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8. Instead of living for ever, as a god, thou shalt die a sudden and violent death.

10. uncircumcised. The Phoenicians were in all probability circumcised; hence, 'thou shalt be like warriors who are left unwashed and are buried on the field of battle; and in the underworld thy lot will be no better than that of the despised outcasts.' Cf. xxxi. 18, xxxii. 19, xxxix. 11 ff. Ezekiel gives no direct regulations as to circumcision, yet it would naturally come to fresh importance (like the Sabbath) during the exile. See the two accounts of its institution, Exod. iv. 24; Joshua v. 2 ff.

xxviii. 11-19. In this elaborate lamentation (cf. xix. 1-9, xxvi. 17-18, xxvii. 32-33), in which the 'Qinah' rhythm is overheard throughout, though it cannot always be distinctly traced, Ezekiel refers to the tradition of a semi-divine being placed in the 'garden of the gods,' and subsequently expelled. Whether this tradition is purely Babylonian, or more generally Semitic, cannot be definitely decided; the colouring is Babylonian, but it seems improbable that Ezekiel should have made such a reference as this to an idea that was foreign to Israelite thought before the exile. Early Babylonian influence would account for its presence in Palestine long before the sixth century B.C. We can hardly doubt that this conception of a divine garden was present to the mind of the author of Gen. ii and iii; but there is no exact Babylonian equiva-

Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, 12
and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Thou
sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.
Thou wast in Eden the garden of God; every precious 13
stone was thy covering, the sardius, the topaz, and the
diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire,
the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was in thee; in the

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lent, either to the story of Eden and the fall, or to this passage in Ezekiel. The general idea has been traced by anthropologists to a primitive Semitic mythological story, now irrecoverable. In Gen. ii, iii it serves merely to form the groundwork for an account of the origin of sin which has nothing mythological about it; in Ezekiel it supplies a picturesque background for Yahweh's judgement on the prince (see note on verse 14).

12. sealest up the sum: these words are wholly obscure; the word for 'sum' may be borrowed from an Assyrian word signifying 'elaborate beauty,' and we may perhaps explain 'thou sealest' as meaning 'thou art the seal-ring,' or final mark of completion on beauty.

13. To assume that the prince was what he pretended to be makes his fall appear the more complete.

Eden the garden of God: cf. xxxi. 8, 9; to be distinguished from the Eden of xxvii. 23. In the epic of Gilgamesh the Babylonian Paradise is situated near the ancient head of the Persian Gulf, where the four rivers separately entered it. The account in Gen. ii. 10 seems to suggest a more northern locality.

every precious stone. This list should be compared with that of the twelve stones in the High Priests' breastplate in Exod. xxviii. 17-20, and the LXX translation of this passage. The Hebrew here contains only nine stones, with the addition of gold; as given in the LXX, the list is identical with that in Exod. xxviii, with the addition of silver and gold before the sixth stone. There is an echo of this verse in Rev. xxi. 19-20 (the foundations of the city). The Hebrew names of precious stones, as of colours, are vague and unscientific; the same stone, if of different colours, would have different names. The breastplate, like the Tyrian prince's 'covering,' preserves a good contrast of colour; the arrangement of the latter is

Green,	yellow,	red,
White and black,	green,	yellow,
White,	red,	blue.

thy tabrets, &c. These words probably refer to the setting of

14 day that thou wast created they were prepared. Thou
wast the anointed cherub that covereth: and I set thee,
so that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou
hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.
15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou

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the 'covering' of stones, and to them should be referred the gold; Davidson suggests 'sockets and grooves,' Jahn 'with gold didst thou fill thy treasure houses and conical chambers.'

14. The text here is unfortunately in some confusion; conjectures are numerous. It seems fairly certain, however, that we should read '*with* the cherub (or cherubs) have I set thee on the holy mountain.' 'That covereth' (*sokek*) is generally given up as unintelligible. Hommel, however, by means of two Babylonian equivalents (*u-sukku* and *parakku*), connects it with the Hebrew word *parōketh*, which is used in Exod. xxxv. 12, xxxix. 34, &c., for the curtain over the holy place in the tabernacle; *sakak*, 'covering,' is also used in Exod. xxxv. 12, 15, 17 for the three screens of the tabernacle. Hence, 'the cherub that covers' would mean 'the cherub of the tabernacle,' or 'the cherub of the most holy place.' *Parraku* is used for 'what is most holy.' On the cherub, see notes on i. 28, x. 1. Winged figures (?'cherubs') are often found in Babylonian drawings connected with sacred trees; the cherub with whom the king associates seems the natural inhabitant and guardian of the holy mountain, or Paradise. There is no need to ask whether Ezekiel is referring to an earlier or later story than that on which Gen. iii. is founded; in the latter, each element is transformed, and the associate of the cherub, here identified with the prince of Tyre, becomes the primaeval man (with his wife), and the cherub is the angel who, subsequently to his expulsion, stands at the entrance of the garden, to prevent his return. Smend regards the cherub in the garden as an Indian conception; in some form the garden is familiar in many parts of Europe and Asia and elsewhere (Meru, Olympus, the Hesperides, Aralu, Asgard, &c.). For 'holy,' see Introd. p. 23. The fiery stones perhaps contain an allusion to aerolites. The mention of them enhances the supernatural splendours of the garden.

15. The king of Tyre is to be driven forth, like the favoured inhabitant of the garden. Cf. Isa. xiv. 12, where Gunkel interprets 'Lucifer son of the morning' as a proper name, a kind of Babylonian Phaethon, whose fall is parallel to the fall referred to here, or perhaps originally identical with it. So Etana, in the Babylonian myth, is tempted to fly to heaven by the eagle, till at last they are flung down to the pit. Cf. notes on xxxi. 8.

wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee. By 16
the multitude of thy traffic they filled the midst of thee
with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore have I cast
thee as profane out of the mountain of God; and I have
destroyed thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the
stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy 17
beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy
brightness: I have cast thee to the ground, I have laid thee
before kings, that they may behold thee. By the mul- 18
titude of thine iniquities, in the unrighteousness of thy
traffic, thou hast profaned thy sanctuaries; therefore have
I brought forth a fire from the midst of thee, it hath
devoured thee, and I have turned thee to ashes upon the
earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they 19
that know thee among the peoples shall be astonished at
thee: thou art become a terror, and thou shalt never be
any more.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son 20, 21

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16. Ezekiel's deep-seated suspicion of commerce here causes him for a moment to drop the figure for a literal reference to Tyre.

O covering cherub. Here also there seems a mistake; it is not a question of the expulsion of the cherub, but of the prince. The LXX reads, 'and the cherub brought thee from the midst of the stones of fire.'

17. The figure is still further discarded, and, forgetting the prince, Ezekiel's thought reverts to the city itself.

18. profaned. This can only be as Israel had profaned the sanctuary of Yahweh, by using it for irreligious purposes. The LXX reads, 'I have profaned,' which is easier, but not therefore necessarily more correct.

19. Cf. xxvii. 35, 36. On the actual fate of Tyre, see notes on xxix. 17-20.

xxviii. 20-24. *On Sidon.* Sidon is to fall, with all who have grieved or oppressed Israel. No special sin of Sidon is mentioned in this brief oracle.

of man, set thy face toward Zidon, and prophesy against
22 it, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I
am against thee, O Zidon; and I will be glorified in
the midst of thee: and they shall know that I am
the LORD, when I shall have executed judgements in her,
23 and shall be sanctified in her. For I will send into her
pestilence and blood in her streets; and the wounded
shall fall in the midst of her, with the sword upon her on
every side; and they shall know that I am the LORD.
24 And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the
house of Israel, nor a grieving thorn of any that are round
about them, that did despite unto them; and they shall
know that I am the Lord GOD.

25 Thus saith the Lord GOD: When I shall have gathered
the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they
are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight
of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land
26 which I gave to my servant Jacob. And they shall dwell
securely therein; yea, they shall build houses, and plant
vineyards, and shall dwell securely; when I have executed
judgements upon all those that do them despite round
about them; and they shall know that I am the LORD
their God.

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21. Sidon, twenty miles north of Tyre, was built, like Tyre, on a ledge of rock off the shore, and was the more prominent of the two cities till the twelfth century B. C.; she followed Tyre against Babylon (xxvii. 8), and was overrun by the Chaldaeans after the battle of Carchemish (605 B. C.), but became more important again after Tyre was humbled at the end of her long siege; she was burnt after a revolt against Artaxerxes Ochus in 351 B. C.; later, she became rapidly Hellenized, and was the home of a school of philosophy well known in the ancient world. Cf. 1 Kings xvi. 31; Mark iii. 8, vii. 24.

24. pricking: cf. Lev. xiii. 51; the analogy of Arabic would suggest the recrudescence of a wound.

xxviii. 25, 26. These verses really supply the reason for the

In the tenth year, in the tenth *month*, in the twelfth *day* **29**

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whole section, chaps. xxv-xxxii. Ezekiel does not simply utter 'dooms' against his neighbours, as his predecessors had done; their fall is the first act in the manifestation of Yahweh's glory and the restoration of his people. But it is not the only act, as is clearly shown in chaps. xxxiv-xxxvii.

SECTION III. ORACLE AGAINST EGYPT (xxix-xxxii).

This orderly and chronological group of prophecies is referred to four separate dates, the first and probably the second preceding, and the third and fourth following, the oracle against Tyre. Thus the first two will be uttered before the fall of Jerusalem. In the midst is inserted a short oracle against Tyre, which is dated nearly seventeen years later. The section begins by a comprehensive threat of destruction against Pharaoh and his country, to be followed after forty years by restoration to a humbled and subservient national existence; then (after the above-mentioned insertion) the prophet breaks into an impassioned series of short 'doom-songs' over Egypt (reminding the reader of the Sword-song in xxi), in which he says nothing about restoration, and foretells her defeat by Nebuchadnezzar. He then, five months later, compares Pharaoh to a lofty world-shadowing tree, which is flung down into Sheol; nearly two years after, he again pictures the ruin of Pharaoh, under the figure of a mighty 'dragon in the seas'; and a fortnight after this, he completes the cycle in a marvellous picture of the entrance of Pharaoh and his army into the underworld, where lie all the vast hosts of the departed empires of the world in shame and contempt. A strangely close literary parallel to this 'dirge' over a doomed enemy will be found in Aeschylus' *Persae*.

Ezekiel's attitude to Egypt offers an interesting contrast to his attitude to Tyre. He gives no direct description of her political greatness, nor does he once clearly allude to the Egyptian bondage or the Red Sea; he refers briefly to the treacherous vacillation of her policy; but he exhausts his resources in figurative descriptions of her grandeur and her startling fall. To actual details of her contemporary history he makes no reference. After defeating Josiah at Megiddo, Necho had pushed on to the Euphrates, but was forced to retire, and suffered complete defeat at Carchemish (605 B. C.). Hophra, who gained the throne in 588 B. C., defeated Tyre and took Sidon, and appears to have been for a time supreme in Lebanon; he is then found in Southern Palestine, threatening the Chaldaean besiegers of Jerusalem, but to no purpose; and he surrenders Palestine without a struggle. Egypt does not, however, disappear from history like Nineveh and

of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
2 Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt,
3 and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt: speak,
and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against
thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth
in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is
4 mine own, and I have made it for myself. And I will

Babylon; she lingers on, ever sinking, under Persians and Ptolemies, until she becomes merely the granary of Rome. Her last sovereign, true to the old Egyptian character, proves a broken reed in the hand of Anthony at Actium, 31 B.C.: cf. verses 6, 7; Isa. xxx. 1-5; Jer. xlii. 14 ff.; Lam. iv. 17. 'Aegyptii, vana gens, et novandis quam gerendis aptior rebus' (Curtius iv. 1. 30).

As in the case of Tyre, Ezekiel's forecast is not literally borne out; but the prophet's main thought, that her pride and vacillation would reduce her to a condition of helpless impotence, and that her military prowess would be brought to an end, was certainly fulfilled. To find fault with details, or to ask whether the power of the Ptolemies did not falsify Ezekiel's predictions, would be a pedantic misunderstanding of the purpose of his prophecy.

xxix. 1-16. *The desolation and restoration of Egypt.*

1. Jan. 586 B.C. This is some seven months before the fall of Jerusalem; the date corresponds to the attack of the Chaldaeans on Egypt.

2. Pharaoh: Hophra, or Apries, who reigned from 588-570.

3. the great dragon. Pharaoh is here represented as filled by a similar pride to that of the prince of Tyre. He is figured as a crocodile. The crocodile was one of the many Egyptian objects of worship, and appears on Egyptian coins of the time of Augustus. Curiously enough, the Arabic term for crocodile is Far'un. Gunkel connects the 'dragon' here, and other references to Egypt as 'Rahab,' with the mythological story of a combat between a god and a chaos-monster (Tiamat); similar traces are to be found in Job vii. 32; Ps. xliv. 20, lxxxix. 10; Isa. xxvii. 1, li. 9, &c. The crocodile could hardly be represented, he thinks, as claiming to have created the Nile (verse 3). It is true that we have found an echo of mythology in chap. xxviii; but there is nothing in Gunkel's ingenious arguments which necessitates either in the mind of the writers or in the store of ideas from which they are supposed to draw, anything more than a poetical representation of the triumph of Yahweh over the rebellious forces of evil. Mythology has barely influenced the language, much less the thought.

put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales; and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, with all the fish of thy
rivers which stick unto thy scales. And I will leave 5
thee *thrown* into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers: thou shalt fall upon the open field; thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered: I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the earth and to the
fowls of the heaven. And all the inhabitants of Egypt 6
shall know that I am the LORD, because they have been
a staff of reed to the house of Israel. When they took 7
hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and didst rend all their shoulders: and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand.
Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will bring 8
a sword upon thee, and will cut off from thee man and
beast. And the land of Egypt shall be a desolation and 9
a waste; and they shall know that I am the LORD: because he hath said, The river is mine, and I have made
it. Therefore behold, I am against thee, and against thy 10
rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from the tower of Seveneh even unto the

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4. Herodotus (ii. 70) refers to the capture of crocodiles with hooks. The reference to the fish sticking in its scales is an imaginative touch characteristic of Ezekiel's love for vivid detail.

The 'wilderness' is at once the battlefield on which Egypt will be defeated and the environment in which a crocodile must necessarily perish.

10. The 'tower' should be Migdol at the north-east corner of Egypt. Seveneh is Syene (Eg. 'Sun'), now Assouan, at the furthest south, on the frontier of Ethiopia; we must therefore read 'from Migdol to Syene.' A large quantity of Aramaic documents, relating to the affairs of Jewish families in Upper Egypt in the fifth century B.C., has recently been discovered at Assouan. See Introd., p. 16. This adds weight to the suggestion that 'Sinim' (Isa. xlix. 12) may be a misreading of Assouan.

11 border of Ethiopia. No foot of man shall pass through it,
nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be
12 inhabited forty years. And I will make the land of Egypt
a desolation in the midst of the countries that are desolate,
and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be
a desolation forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians
among the nations, and will disperse them through the
13 countries. For thus saith the Lord GOD: At the end of
forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the peoples
14 whither they were scattered: and I will bring again the
captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the
land of Pathros, into the land of their birth; and they
15 shall be there a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of
the kingdoms; neither shall it any more lift itself up
above the nations: and I will diminish them, that they
16 shall no more rule over the nations. And it shall be no
more the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing
iniquity to remembrance, when they turn to look after
them: and they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

17 And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year,

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11. forty years: cf. iv. 6, where the captivity of Judah also is to last for a generation. Isaiah and Jeremiah both foretell a restoration for Egypt (Isa. xix. 24; Jer. xlvi. 26): cf. for future restorations of Tyre, Moab, &c., Isa. xix. 16 ff.; Jer. xlviii. 47, xlix. 6, 11, 39.

14. Egypt was a nation; not, like Tyre, a commercial city with wide connexions. Ezekiel could not imagine its ceasing to be; but it will no longer be in a position to harm or tempt Israel (verse 15).

Pathros, in the Thebaid in Upper Egypt, which Herodotus and Diodorus rightly hold to be the original seat of Egyptian rule; the first two dynasties had their seat at This, also in Upper Egypt.

16. Cf. note on xxi. 23. Every alliance with Egypt brings the headstrong folly of Israel into fresh prominence.

xxix. 17-21. *Addendum on the fate of Tyre.* This is Ezekiel's latest prophecy, dated Mar. 570 B. C., between one and two years

in the first *month*, in the first *day* of the month, the
word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, 18
Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to
serve a great service against Tyre: every head was made
bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no
wages, nor his army, from Tyre, for the service that he
had served against it: therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: 19
Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar
king of Babylon; and he shall carry off her multitude,
and take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the
wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt 20
as his recompence for which he served, because they
wrought for me, saith the Lord GOD.

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later than chaps. xl-xlviii. What is its relation to the facts of history? Josephus recounts a siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar lasting thirteen years, but says nothing about its result; the silence of authorities on this point seems to imply that neither side had much to be proud of, which would be the case if Nebuchadnezzar had weakened Tyre, but not destroyed it. This Ezekiel also implies. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt in 568, a year after Amasis had deposed Hophra. Whether, when Ezekiel wrote, the siege of Tyre had been actually raised cannot be decided, and is of little moment. Ezekiel evidently saw that his former prophecy of 586 B.C. was mistaken, and he now expected the defeat, though not necessarily the utter destruction, of Egypt. The difference in detail is noticeable between these verses and the prophecy on Egypt seventeen years earlier.

18. Note the picturesqueness of the language. As Nebuchadnezzar had no fleet, the arm of the sea between Tyre and the mainland had to be filled up: hence, the bearing of burdens.

wages: another grim jest. He had hoped to make Tyre pay him and his army for their labour in attacking her, and he had to leave the city's treasures untouched: he must, therefore, look elsewhere. He finds what he requires by spoiling the guilty land of Egypt. The reference to Egypt explains the insertion of the prophecy at this particular point.

19. Under Amasis, if Herodotus may be trusted (ii. 172), Egypt enjoyed a fair measure of prosperity. Here also Ezekiel's anticipations were not literally fulfilled.

21 In that day will I cause an horn to bud forth unto the house of Israel, and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

30 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD:
3 Howl ye, Woe worth the day! For the day is near, even
the day of the LORD is near, a day of clouds; it shall be
4 the time of the heathen. And a sword shall come upon
Egypt, and anguish shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain
shall fall in Egypt; and they shall take away her
multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down.

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21. In that day: a reference to an indefinite future, common enough in Isa. i-xxxix, though strangely rare in Isa. xl-lxvi.

horn: a common expression for general prosperity.

the opening of the mouth: these are strange words, if we are to take them as Ezekiel's last prophecy. The dumbness of iii. 26 had been already removed (xxxiii. 22). Either we must regard the phrase as referring, in a quite general sense, to joy and thanksgiving, or the verse must be a fragment of some prophecy at least seventeen years earlier, and placed here when verses 17-20 were inserted in chap. xxix.

xxx. 1-19. *Destruction of Egypt: her allies, her populace, and her social and religious life.* Ezekiel seems here to be expecting a grand conflict between Egypt and Chaldaea. As a matter of fact, the Egyptian army gave up Palestine without striking a blow, and after its retreat was left unmolested. Egypt proved even more Egyptian than the prophet had anticipated.

2. Woe worth the day: 'worth' is derived from an Anglo-Saxon root meaning 'be,' and is cognate with the German 'werden.' 'The day' is properly in the dative case.

3. the day: in Amos (v. 18) 'the day' is the time of judgement on Yahweh's own people; often, in Isaiah and elsewhere, it is the time of deliverance (cf. xxix. 21 note); here, in a more definitely eschatological sense, it refers to God's final doom on the heathen world, of which Egypt is the representative. Cf. xxxviii, xxxix.

4. Ethiopia, or Cush (Gen. x. 6). The Ethiopians were auxiliaries of Egypt (Nah. iii. 9; Jer. xlvi. 9). The 'foundations' are the mercenaries who were now the chief support of Egypt: cf. Breasted, *History of Egypt*, chap. xxviii.

Ethiopia, and Put, and Lud, and all the mingled people, 5
and Cub, and the children of the land that is in league,
shall fall with them by the sword.

Thus saith the LORD: They also that uphold Egypt 6
shall fall, and the pride of her power shall come down:
from the tower of Seveneh shall they fall in it by the
sword, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall be desolate 7
in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her
cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.
And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have 8
set a fire in Egypt, and all her helpers are destroyed. In 9
that day shall messengers go forth from before me in ships
to make the careless Ethiopians afraid; and there shall
be anguish upon them, as in the day of Egypt; for, lo,
it cometh.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: I will also make the mul- 10
titude of Egypt to cease, by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar
king of Babylon. He and his people with him, the 11

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5. Put, and Lud: see note on xxvii. 10.

mingled people: 'Arabians' should probably be read.

Cub, a name otherwise unknown; it would seem to be a mistake for either Lybians or Nubians.

the land that is in league, or, as R.V. marg., 'the land of the covenant'; this can hardly refer to some well-known territory of subjects or allies of Egypt, nor to Jews who had fled to Egypt; a slight change would give 'the sons of the Cerethites' (see xxv. 16). Jer. xxv. 20 mentions the 'mingled people,' Uz (is 'Cub' a mistake for this?), and then the Philistines.

6. tower of Seveneh: cf. note on xxix. 10.

9. Yahweh speaks as if he had come in person into Egypt, like another and more terrible Nebuchadnezzar. His envoys are to travel up the Nile—the most natural way to Upper Egypt (cf. Isa. xviii. 2). The word for 'ship' is said to be borrowed from the Egyptian. LXX reads instead 'in haste.' Cf. Verg. *Aen.* ii. 311 'iam proximus ardet Ucalegon.'

the day of Egypt: cf. verse 3.

10. multitude: cf. xxix. 19, the native population of Egypt, as distinguished from her *condottiere*.

terrible of the nations, shall be brought in to destroy the land; and they shall draw their swords against Egypt,
12 and fill the land with the slain. And I will make the rivers dry, and will sell the land into the hand of evil men; and I will make the land desolate, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the LORD have spoken it.

13 Thus saith the Lord GOD: I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause the images to cease from Noph; and there shall be no more a prince out of the land of Egypt:
14 and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt. And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set a fire in Zoan, and
15 will execute judgements in No. And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strong hold of Egypt; and I will cut off the
16 multitude of No. And I will set a fire in Egypt; Sin shall be in great anguish, and No shall be broken up:
17 and Noph *shall have* adversaries in the day-time. The

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12. The drying of the rivers and the desolation of the land means one and the same thing in Egypt.

13. Noph is Memphis, the capital of Lower Egypt, south of Cairo; Amasis had his capital there. Hophra, his predecessor, lived at Sais in the Delta. Memphis was the seat of the worship of Ptah and Apis. The word for 'images' (literally, as in R.V. marg., 'things of nought') is used nowhere else by Ezekiel.

14. A further example of Ezekiel's geographical knowledge. On Pathros, see note on xxix. 14; Zoan is Tanis or San, on the east bank of the second arm of the Nile (Cf. Ps. lxxviii. 12, 43; Num. xiii. 22). The twenty-first and twenty-third dynasties reigned here, and the city is also identified with Abaris, the seat of the Hyksos, or shepherd-monarchs, who were in power when Jacob entered Egypt. No is Thebes, the capital of Upper Egypt. It was the seat of the worship of Amon (hence its Greek name, city of Zeus), whose priests had formerly possessed great influence: cf. Nah. iii. 8; Jer. xlvi. 25.

15. Sin is Pelusium, the garrison of the eastern frontier of Egypt, now buried in sand. LXX here suggests, by a very slight change of reading, Seveneh or Assouan (see xxix. 10); in which case 'Sin' in verse 15 should be altered also.

16. in the day-time: R.V. marg., 'all the day long'; the con-

young men of Aven and of Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword: and these *cities* shall go into captivity. At 18
Tehaphnehes also the day shall withdraw itself, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt, and the pride of her power shall cease in her: as for her, a cloud shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity. Thus will 19
I execute judgements in Egypt: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first 20
month, in the seventh *day* of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, I have 21
broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, lo, it hath not been bound up to apply *healing* medicines, to put a roller to bind it, that it be strong to hold the sword.

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struction is 'unnatural' (Davidson); an easy alteration would give 'Noph—its day is darkened.'

17. Aven is Heliopolis or On (Gen. xli. 45); in Lower Egypt again, north of Memphis. On is an Egyptian word for light, or the Sun; it was the centre of the worship of Ra, the god of the Sun.

Pi-beseth is Bubastis, now Tel-Basta, also in Lower Egypt ('Pi' stands for 'city' as in Pithom); the city of the goddess Bast. At Bubastis the sacred cats were mummied. Each of the places in this list would thus suggest to the prophet some special idolatry. For 'these *cities*' another proper name would have been expected.

18. Tehaphnehes: in Jer. xliii. 7, xliv. 1, Tahpanhes, or Daphne (Hdt. ii. 30. 107). Now, probably, Tel-el-Defenne, near the site of Pelusium, an important fortress. 'Yokes' is generally regarded as an error for 'sceptres.'

xxx. 20-26. *The defeat of Pharaoh in battle by Nebuchadnezzar.* This passage is dated March 586 B.C., four months before the fall of Jerusalem, and seems to refer directly to Egypt's attempt to relieve the beleaguered city (Jer. xxxiv. 7, xxxvii. 5). That this attempt came to nothing is to the two prophets a mercy rather than a disappointment; it was the beginning of the wished-for end of the long agony.

21. roller, or bandage; the cognate verb means to roll in swathes or swaddling clothes. The tense used implies that

22 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken; and I will cause
23 the sword to fall out of his hand. And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them
24 through the countries. And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand: but I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded man.
25 And I will hold up the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out
26 upon the land of Egypt. And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them through the countries; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

31 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the third *month*, in the first *day* of the month, that the word of the

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a serious blow has already been inflicted on the power of Egypt, which (verse 22) will be followed by others.

23. Cf. xxix. 12 and xxx. 26.

24. Nebuchadnezzar is only Yahweh's instrument; perhaps Ezekiel's deep conviction of this truth prevented his joining Babylon to the nations whom he denounces. For similar prophetic convictions with regard to Assyria and Cyrus, cf. Isa. x. 5 and xlv. 1.

25. This verse repeats verse 24, as verse 26 repeats verse 23. In the second half of the verse LXX reads what seems to be a repetition of xxix. 19.

xxxi. *The Downfall of the Mighty Cedar.* Two months after the definite predictions of chap. xxx. 20, and therefore only two months before the fall of the city, Ezekiel returns to his favourite device of a figurative doom-song, and instead of the dragon (chap. xxix), a cedar-tree is used as the emblem of the pride of Pharaoh (see xvii. 3, xix. 10). See note on xxviii. 1.

xxxi. 1-9. *The original grandeur of the king of Egypt.* The language here used might well have been true of Egypt in the days of her prosperity, notably under the earlier dynasties of the new

LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, say unto 2
Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude; Whom art
thou like in thy greatness? Behold, the Assyrian was 3
a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a
shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top
was among the thick boughs. The waters nourished 4
him, the deep made him to grow: her rivers ran round
about her plantation; and she sent out her channels unto
all the trees of the field. Therefore his stature was 5
exalted above all the trees of the field; and his boughs
were multiplied, and his branches became long by reason
of many waters, when he shot *them* forth. All the fowls 6
of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his
branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their
young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations.
Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his 7
branches: for his root was by many waters. The cedars 8

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kingdom in the fifteenth and fourteenth centuries B. C.; but Ezekiel is plainly thinking, not of some historical golden age, but, as in the case of the prince of Tyre (xxviii. 11 ff.), of the contrast between an ideal past and the coming ruin.

2. Whom art thou like: i. e. thou canst be compared to none.

3. the Assyrian: verses 10 and 18 show conclusively that Pharaoh, and not the vanished Assyrian power, is the subject of the chapter. The addition of one letter gives us the word 'tallness,' which may also be understood as the name of a tree, the *Sherbin.* We may translate 'in tallness *thou wast* a cedar'; or regard 'tallness' itself as being a scribal error for some word signifying 'thou art like.'

4. The tree was large enough to force its roots beyond the surrounding canals to the great deep below. 'Her plantation' must mean 'the plantation nourished by the deep.' The last clause of the verse, if the text is correct, still refers to the deep, where we should have expected a reference to the cedar; by the 'deep,' however, Ezekiel appears to be idealizing the Nile, from which all Egypt's life was drawn: cf. verse 7.

6. The birds signify dependent peoples (cf. verse 12). A similar figure is used by Christ, Matt. xiii. 32.

in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the plane trees were not as his branches; nor was any tree in the garden of God like
9 unto him in his beauty. I made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him.

10 Therefore thus said the Lord GOD: Because thou art exalted in stature, and he hath set his top among the
11 thick boughs, and his heart is lifted up in his height; I will even deliver him into the hand of the mighty one of the nations; he shall surely deal with him: I have driven
12 him out for his wickedness. And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the watercourses of the land; and all the peoples of the earth are gone

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8. the garden of God. This passage also has been supposed to show the influence of Babylonian mythology; a tree (possibly, it is suggested, the origin of the Tree of Life, in Gen. ii. 9) is often depicted on Babylonian cylinders, surrounded by attendant genii or divinities; such foreign influence, however, is no more necessary here than in the narrative of Paradise. Cf. note on xxviii. 13.

9. Yahweh claims as his own work what is elsewhere the result of the 'many waters.'

For the envy of the trees, compare the parables of Jotham (Judges ix. 8) and of Jehoash (2 Kings xiv. 9).

xxxi. 10-14. *The fall of the tree, and its significance.*

10. thou, the only instance of the second person in the chapter.

11. The text here is awkward, and appears to have been read differently by the LXX. The 'mighty one' is Nebuchadnezzar; 'for his wickedness' should be joined to 'deal'; 'I have driven him out' suits the allegory of xxviii. 13 ff. better than its present context.

12. Figure and literal description here run into one another as in a dissolving view.

are gone down. A small change would give 'have spread their wings'; for the repeated 'have left' a different verb may have stood originally; the LXX suggests 'and were dismayed.'

down from his shadow, and have left him. Upon his 13
ruin all the fowls of the heaven shall dwell, and all the
beasts of the field shall be upon his branches: to the end 14
that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves
in their stature, neither set their top among the thick
boughs, nor that their mighty ones stand up in their
height, *even* all that drink water: for they are all delivered
unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst
of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: In the day when he went 15
down to hell I caused a mourning: I covered the deep
for him, and I restrained the rivers thereof, and the great
waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for
him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him. I 16
made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when
I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the
pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of

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13. A general warning, as is often inserted at the end of a Greek play, against boastfulness or self-confidence: cf. Ps. ii. 10. The 'trees by the waters' are other nations; 'thick boughs' should be translated 'clouds,' as R. V. marg.; 'their mighty ones' means 'the mighty ones among them,' i. e. 'among the nations'; 'all that drink water' refers to the proudest trees (cf. Ps. i. 3) or the nations (verse 16). In the second half of the verse the picture is left for the reality.

xxxi. 15–18. *The universal consternation at Pharaoh's fall.*

15. hell: as R. V. marg., Sheol, the abode of the dead; equivalent to 'the nether parts of the earth' in verses 14 and 16. See p. 245.

I covered: the word is not in the LXX; probably it should be omitted, as inserted from xxvi. 19; the clause would then read, 'I made the deep to mourn for him,' which improves the rhythm.

the trees of the field: the nations still existing, who dread a like fate for themselves.

16. the pit: i. e. the grave.

the trees of Eden: the other nations which are destroyed and in the grave. These are 'comforted' to find that even Pharaoh

Lebanon, all that drink water, were comforted in the
17 nether parts of the earth. They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain by the sword; yea, they that were his arm, *that* dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the nations.

18 To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

32 And it came to pass in the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, in the first *day* of the month, that the word of
2 the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up

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shares their fate. Cf. xiv. 23, xvi. 54, xxxii. 31; also xxxv. 14. For the expression 'of Eden,' cf. verses 8 and 9.

17. They also: the nations referred to in verse 16.

slain: lit. 'pierced,' a more graphic word. Cf. xxviii. 8, xxxii. 19.

his arm: LXX, altering a single vowel, reads 'seed'; but 'arm' is more suitable to the following clause; Pharaoh's allies and dependants (e. g. those mentioned in xxx. 5). 'His shadow' means the protection of his rule. Cf. Ps. xvii. 8, &c.

18. To whom art thou . . . like? Cf. verse 2.

the uncircumcised: circumcision was of great importance in Egypt. Joshua v. 9 implies that the Egyptians had taunted Israel with not being circumcised like themselves. But the reference here is probably wider. See note on xxviii. 10; and compare the use of the term in the following chapter.

xxxii. 1-16. A final dirge or rather 'doom-song' over Pharaoh, parallel to that over Tyre in xxviii. 11 ff. It is dated nearly two years after the preceding chapter, and therefore a year and a half after the fall of Jerusalem, when the vanity of Egypt's promises of help has become abundantly clear. The poetical form of the dirge is dropped after verse 2. Pharaoh is again compared to the crocodile, as in xxix. 2 ff.

1. twelfth year: Feb. 584. LXX reads 'eleventh,' thus bringing the chapter nearer in time to chap. xxxi. See note on xxxiii. 21.

a lamentation for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say unto him, Thou wast likened unto a young lion of the nations: yet art thou as a dragon in the seas; and thou brakest forth with thy rivers, and troubledst the waters with thy feet, and fouledst their rivers. Thus saith the Lord GOD: 3
I will spread out my net over thee with a company of many peoples; and they shall bring thee up in my net.
And I will leave thee upon the land, I will cast thee 4
forth upon the open field, and will cause all the fowls of the heaven to settle upon thee, and I will satisfy the beasts of the whole earth with thee. And I will lay thy 5
flesh upon the mountains, and fill the valleys with thy height. I will also water with thy blood the land where- 6
in thou swimmest, even to the mountains; and the watercourses shall be full of thee. And when I shall 7
extinguish thee, I will cover the heaven, and make the

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2. lamentation: cf. verse 16, and xxvii. 2, xxviii. 12. In none of these passages is there the least sympathy for the fallen power.

a young lion. This particular comparison seems out of place here, by the side of what follows. Cornill emends the passage to 'a lion of the nations is upon thee,' &c.; i. e. Nebuchadnezzar. The error, if such it be, is as old as the LXX.

yet: Hebrew, 'and.' The words do not necessarily imply any contrast. Cf. Rev. xii. 15.

brakest forth, i. e. blowing water from thy nostrils; a further suggestion of the careless pride of the crocodile, as the following words suggest his brutal destructiveness.

4. Cf. xxix. 5. In 4 Esdras vi. 49, Leviathan is made food for all nations.

5. Cf. xxxi. 12. Ezekiel is perhaps thinking of the overflow of the Nile, which may have suggested the crocodile's being able to reach the hills before his death. Hophra had thought of cutting a canal from the Nile to the Red Sea; but his engineers told him that he would thereby flood the whole country.

6. wherein thou swimmest: the word here used occurs nowhere else; probably it means 'with what flows out from thee,' and 'thy blood' may then be an explanatory gloss; so LXX.

7. The day of judgement brings darkness: cf. xxx. 18, also Isa. xiii. 10; Joel ii. 10. Cf. Job ix. 13, xxvi. 12, where 'Rahab,'

stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and
8 the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights
of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness
9 upon thy land, saith the Lord GOD. I will also vex the
hearts of many peoples, when I shall bring thy destruction
among the nations, into the countries which thou hast
10 not known. Yea, I will make many peoples amazed at
thee, and their kings shall be horribly afraid for thee,
when I shall brandish my sword before them; and they
shall tremble at every moment, every man for his own
11 life, in the day of thy fall. For thus saith the Lord GOD:
The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon thee.
12 By the swords of the mighty will I cause thy multitude
to fall; the terrible of the nations are they all: and they
shall spoil the pride of Egypt, and all the multitude
13 thereof shall be destroyed. I will destroy also all the
beasts thereof from beside many waters; neither shall
the foot of man trouble them any more, nor the hoofs of
14 beasts trouble them. Then will I make their waters
clear, and cause their rivers to run like oil, saith the
15 Lord GOD. When I shall make the land of Egypt

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elsewhere used for Egypt (Ps. li. 9, lxxxvii. 4), is spoken of as a monster, whose destruction displays the might of God.

9, 10. For the effect of the fall of Egypt on the nations, cf. verse 16 and xxxi. 15; compare also the effect of the fall of Tyre, xxvii. 29 ff.; the terror caused by Egypt's fall is to extend further than her previous influence or commerce.

9. For 'destruction' LXX reads 'captivity.'

10. my sword: explained in verse 11 as referring to Babylon.

13. Compare Pharaoh's dream, Gen. xli. 2; as a matter of fact, but few cattle are to be found actually by the river banks in Egypt.

14. The waters of the Nile will run clear, because the desolation of the land will have left no animals to trouble them. The Nile water is always turbid; this, to Ezekiel, was typical of the restless Egyptian policy.

desolate and waste, a land destitute of that whereof it was full, when I shall smite all them that dwell therein, then shall they know that I am the Lord. This is the 16
lamentation wherewith they shall lament; the daughters of the nations shall lament therewith: for Egypt, and for all her multitude, shall they lament therewith, saith the Lord God.

It came to pass also in the twelfth year, in the fifteenth 17

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16. This lament is to be sung by the daughters—the wailing women—among the nations, since the desolation of the country will have left no natives of Egypt.

xxxii. 17-32. The foregoing prophecies of doom over Tyre and Egypt are now followed by a weird and Dantesque 'funeral march' over the whole heathen world. Pharaoh and his host descend in ignominy to Sheol, where they find all the nations of the past—Assyria, Elam, Meshech and Tubal, Edom (not to be omitted here!), the princes of the north, and Sidon (seven in all; Tyre is not mentioned by name). In Sheol, the nations are thought of as dwelling together as units; there is no hint here of the independent existence of individuals beyond death (cf. the common expression 'gathered to his fathers'). The only distinction is between the 'uncircumcised' and the 'mighty' (verse 27); the former lie in the 'pit,' the latter in Sheol proper. It follows that no teaching as to the future state is to be derived from this passage. Ezekiel is making use of current conceptions, as in xxviii. 13 ff., and xxxi. 8, 9; we cannot therefore justifiably conclude that this chapter contains Ezekiel's own definite opinion about the future. Elsewhere in the O. T. Sheol is referred to as the seat of a shadowy continuation of existence after death, wherein any real communion with God is impossible (cf. Isa. xxxviii. 18; Ps. lxxxviii. 10, cxv. 17, &c.),—a purely neutral belief, which is gradually conquered by the religious conviction that communion with God cannot be brought to an end by merely physical death (cf. Job xix. 27; Ps. xvii. 5; Dan. xii. 2, &c.). The *Odyssey* (Book xii) contains a picture of Hades far more definite, from the point of view of individual existence, than Ezekiel's; but in Greece, where, save in the mysteries, the thought of a personal communion with God attained no importance, the survival of death was chiefly limited to renown (compare George Eliot's well-known lines), while in Judaism it advanced steadily to a personal resurrection (cf. Salmond, *Chris-*

day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto
18 me, saying, Son of man, wail for the multitude of Egypt,
and cast them down, even her, and the daughters of the
famous nations, unto the nether parts of the earth, with
19 them that go down into the pit. Whom dost thou pass
in beauty? go down, and be thou laid with the uncir-
20 cumcised. They shall fall in the midst of them that are
slain by the sword: she is delivered to the sword: draw
21 her away and all her multitudes. The strong among the
mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with

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tian Doctrine of Immortality, p. xxxii; and J. A. Stewart, *Myths of Plato*, pp. 60 ff.; also A. Lods, *La Croyance à la Vie Future*).

As a dirge over the nations of antiquity nothing could be more striking than this passage. In the last 150 years all the great powers in Ezekiel's world, except one, had been successively flung down. No such disasters had ever been crowded into a similar period. Babylon herself, though Ezekiel seems not to have expected this, is shortly to fall with a like crash. These sixteen verses are the death-song of the world in which Israel had grown up; in the new world, which was to take its place, the nation of Israel was to be replaced by the church of Judaism. The passage is imitated in Isa. xiv: cf. Jer. xxv. 15–28; Isa. lxvi. 24.

17. The number of the month is again omitted (as in xxvi. 1); LXX reads '1st,' thus dating this section one and a half months after the date it gives for verses 1 ff.; probably '12th,' i.e. a fortnight after the preceding.

18. cast them down. The prophetic word is itself regarded as a force in the world: cf. xxxvii. 9; Jer. i. 10.

19. Cf. xxxi. 2, 18. For the 'uncircumcised,' see note on xxviii. 10. The pronouns change from masculine to feminine, singular to plural, as Ezekiel thinks of the king, the land, or the warriors: so in verses 22, 23.

20. The text is in some disorder, but it cannot be confidently restored. As it stands, the Egyptians are to be flung into the midst of the slain; Egypt is given over to destruction; the inhabitants of the underworld ('draw' is plural: cf. verse 25) are to hurry her to her final abode. For the whole verse the LXX simply reads, 'and all his multitude shall lie down.'

21. The strong among the mighty are the warriors who belong to the second or higher class, as opposed to the uncircumcised; they dwell in 'Sheol' (R. V. marg.), and speak to Egypt from thence (cf. verse 27). LXX translates by 'giants.'

them that help him: they are gone down, they lie still,
even the uncircumcised, slain by the sword. Asshur is 22
there and all her company; his graves are round about
him: all of them slain, fallen by the sword: whose 23
graves are set in the uttermost parts of the pit, and her
company is round about her grave: all of them slain,
fallen by the sword, which caused terror in the land of
the living. There is Elam and all her multitude round 24
about her grave: all of them slain, fallen by the sword,
which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts
of the earth, which caused their terror in the land of the
living, and have borne their shame with them that go
down to the pit. They have set her a bed in the midst 25
of the slain with all her multitude; her graves are round

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them that help him. These words must be joined in sense with 'to him.' The LXX suggests, more picturesquely, as the actual words of the heroes: 'Before whom hast thou any precedence? Come down and make thy bed with the uncircumcised'; i. e. verse 19 is made to follow verse 21.

22. The first to be mentioned as inhabiting this 'inferno,' the 'pit,' is Asshur, the most destructive and pitiless of the ancient powers, as her own monuments clearly show (verse 23^b). Note the impressiveness of the repetition, which, however, the LXX omits. The king lies in the centre; round him are the graves of his warriors. So in verse 24.

24. Elam, originally a greater power than Babylon, had been made tributary by Assyria, c. 650 B. C. Here she is spoken of as an independent power; cf. Isa. xxi. 2, and xxii. 6; also Jer. xlix. 34. Elam lay on the highlands east of the Tigris valley: cf. Gen. xiv. 2.

their shame: because they too have no place with the nobler dead in Sheol.

25. her. This must refer to Elam, whose bed is made by her slain warriors in her midst. For this whole verse LXX reads simply, 'in the midst of the wounded.' But these repetitions have a special and surprising literary effectiveness; and it is far easier to suppose that Ezekiel intended this effect, and that the Greek translators failed to observe this, than that some scribe was led by a happy accident to make an improvement which had not occurred to Ezekiel. There would be no reason for adding these words as a mere gloss.

about her: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the
sword; for their terror was caused in the land of the
living, and they have borne their shame with them that
go down to the pit: he is put in the midst of them that
26 be slain. There is Meshech, Tubal, and all her multitude;
her graves are round about her: all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword; for they caused their terror in
27 the land of the living. And they shall not lie with the
mighty that are fallen of the uncircumcised, which are
gone down to hell with their weapons of war, and have
laid their swords under their heads, and their iniquities
are upon their bones; for *they were* the terror of the
28 mighty in the land of the living. But thou shalt be
broken in the midst of the uncircumcised, and shalt lie
29 with them that are slain by the sword. There is Edom,
her kings and all her princes, which in their might are
laid with them that are slain by the sword: they shall lie
with the uncircumcised, and with them that go down to

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26. Meshech and Tubal: see note on xxvii. 13.

27. These, too, have no place with the 'mighty.' 'Of the uncircumcised' should be 'of old time,' as the LXX reads. 'Uncircumcised' is the term used of the inhabitants of the 'pit.' The 'heroes' have gone down to Sheol in full armour, instead of being stripped of their weapons like the corpses of the defeated.

their iniquities. Nothing in the context suggests that the 'mighty' also are sinners, and are being punished in Sheol. Cornill suggests 'shields,' corresponding to 'weapons' and 'swords'; this change would complete the picture of the mighty and honourable dead. A scribe, not recognizing the picture, might have made the alteration to the present Hebrew text; but if Cornill's conjecture is thought too violent, we should probably refer the clause, like that which follows it, to Meshech and Tubal (cf. verse 26); in any case, no other reference is made in the passage to 'iniquities.'

28. Pharaoh is here addressed once more.

29. Edom: included here not so much for her political importance as for the hatred with which she was regarded; for her 'kings' and 'princes,' see Gen. xxxvi. 31 ff. See chap. xxxv.

the pit. There be the princes of the north, all of them, 30
and all the Zidonians, which are gone down with the
slain; in the terror which they caused by their might
they are ashamed; and they lie uncircumcised with them
that are slain by the sword, and bear their shame with
them that go down to the pit. Pharaoh shall see them, 31
and shall be comforted over all his multitude: even
Pharaoh and all his army, slain by the sword, saith the
Lord GOD. For I have put his terror in the land of the 32
living: and he shall be laid in the midst of the uncircumcised, with them that are slain by the sword, even Pharaoh
and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son **33**

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30. the princes of the north, from their position between Edom and Sidon, should be the chiefs of Syria (cf. 2 Kings viii. 7, &c., on Ben-hadad and Hazael).

31. shall be comforted: in xxxi. 16 the nations of the dead are 'comforted' over Pharaoh; here he is himself 'comforted' to find that his previous foes are in the 'pit' with himself. Cf. xiv. 23, xxxv. 14.

32. his terror: the R.V. marg. 'my' represents the margin in the Hebrew text. As Davidson points out, neither is in satisfactory accord with the context, though each could be paralleled from Ezekiel's thought elsewhere. Better, 'he put his terror'; Pharaoh is then set side by side with Asshur, Elam, and the others (verses 23-25, &c.), all of whom, feared when on earth, are now lying despised in the 'pit.' Ezekiel's condemnation is justified by history. However mighty the nations whose warriors are here crowded into the grave, they have left no such legacies as Greece, Rome, or even Babylon, nor could any doom more terrible be pronounced over a people than that it should be 'one with Nineveh and Tyre.' Contrast this 'world-judgement' with that of Matt. xxv. 31 ff.

DIVISION II. THE PURIFICATION OF ISRAEL (xxxiii-xxxix).

The actual reception of the news of the fall of Jerusalem (xxxiii. 21) marks the opening of a new activity on the part of Ezekiel. His mouth is 'opened.' In the months of suspense, while the city was being besieged, he has become assured of the ultimate of man, speak to the children of thy people, and say

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fate of the heathen; and when the news arrives, although the prophecy of chap. xxxii has not yet been delivered, he is aware of his new mission—to make ready his countrymen for that new era of restoration and unsoiled service for which all the disasters inside and outside Israel have only been a preparation. The chapters in which he discharges this duty contain his chief contribution to O. T. theology, and indeed form the closest link between that and the theology of the N. T. itself. After six years of opposition to all the aspirations of his people, he finds himself now in a position of authority which can only have been equalled by that of Isaiah after the great deliverance in 701 B. C. Sublimely undisturbed as he is by the fact that the Jews were still languishing in exile, the success of his first great prophecy turns his mind to the working out of the details of the second. The political disaster has only served to make possible a religious triumph. But the prophet's tone, though different, is still in one important respect the same. His analysis of Israel's state is far too deep to allow him to forget that the real foe is neither Babylon nor the rule of Zedekiah, but sin; and sin can only be got rid of by penitence; not until Purgatory has been passed through can Paradise be reached. Hence the sombreness of these chapters, in which only the attentive reader detects that the keynote has changed from the minor to the major.

The new division is prefaced by a fresh discussion of Ezekiel's old problem of responsibility, prophetic and general, in which the results of chaps. xiv and xviii are restated; in each case, the prophet ends not with doom, but with deliverance (xxxiii. 1-20). Then comes the arrival of the messenger from the captured city; and Ezekiel greets the news with no exultation, but by emphasizing the sin that must bring desolation, and with a reference, partly ironical, to the position he had hitherto held in the community (xxxiii. 21-33). Next, he turns again to the false prophets or shepherds (cf. chap. xi), but passes quietly from their richly-deserved fate to his first detailed prophecy of deliverance for the sheep (chap. xxxiv). This picture suggests another, the malignant desires of Edom; as these are disappointed, so Edom shall be for ever silenced (chap. xxxv). Despised as it had been, the land shall be purified, and the prophet, growing in positiveness and detail as he proceeds, predicts not only restoration but a new spirit, a new prosperity, and a new penitence—three gifts which flow from the pure grace of Yahweh (chap. xxxvi). As if his hearers found this too much to hope for, he supports it by an allegory and a formal prediction of restoration, Israel and Judah being reunited in humble and everlasting peace with God (chap. xxxvii). But is there in truth no more cause for fear? Yes; the unto them, When I bring the sword upon a land, if the people of the land take a man from among them, and set him for their watchman: if, when he seeth the sword 3 come upon the land, he blow the trumpet, and warn the

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far-off barbarian hordes are still waiting to swoop upon the peaceful land; but they will be flung down in a destruction that will place the renown of Yahweh and the safety of his people beyond all danger; and Israel, with hearts purified afresh by this merciful and unmerited deliverance, will now have nothing more to shake them from their allegiance to Yahweh (chaps. xxxviii, xxxix).

Only one date is given in this division, in xxxiii. 21. The concluding division is dated twelve years later; these chapters were probably delivered at intervals through this period, but after 586 history, with the exiles, had ceased to move, and the question of the precise dates is quite immaterial; all we observe is, as in chaps. i–xxiv, a correspondence in order with the probable course of thought both in the prophet and his hearers.

SECTION I. LAST THREATENINGS AND FIRST PROMISES (xxxiii. 1—xxxiv. 30).

xxxiii. 1–20. *Individual Responsibility, public and private.* Now, at last, the prophet's mouth is opened (see note on verse 22); but although he stands at the dawn of the new era, his language is the language of the previous years. See, for the first nine verses, iii. 16–21, xiv. 9–11; for the rest of the section, xiv. 1–8, xviii. 1–32. In each case the principles are the same; the only difference is in the atmosphere, or in the prophet's attitude to the principles. Previously, the prophet considers four cases—the wicked unwarned, and warned; the righteous sinning without warning and dying, and warned before sin and living. Here, the cases are simply of the wicked who sin, and who die after warning, and without warning. Previously (chap. xviii), the just man lives, his wicked son dies; the wicked man's just son lives; the repentant sinner also lives; the just man who sins dies. Here (stated three times over) the just man who sins dies; the sinner who repents lives. Before the purpose of the coming restoration can be understood, the responsibility of the individual and the relentless sequence of death upon sin and of life upon goodness must be reaffirmed still more clearly.

xxxiii. 1–9. *The Watchman*: cf. Jer. xxiii. 9–40.

2. the children of thy people. We hear no more of the 'rebellious house.'

3. the trumpet: cf. Amos iii. 6.

4 people; then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet,
and taketh not warning, if the sword come, and take him
5 away, his blood shall be upon his own head. He heard
the sound of the trumpet, and took not warning; his
blood shall be upon him: whereas if he had taken
6 warning he should have delivered his soul. But if the
watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet,
and the people be not warned, and the sword come, and
take any person from among them; he is taken away in
his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's
7 hand. So thou, son of man, I have set thee a watchman
unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my
8 mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say
unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die,
and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his
way; that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his
9 blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou
warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, and he turn
not from his way; he shall die in his iniquity, but thou
hast delivered thy soul.

10 And thou, son of man, say unto the house of Israel:
Thus ye speak, saying, Our transgressions and our sins
are upon us, and we pine away in them; how then

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4. if the sword come. The sword, as one of Yahweh's four plagues (see xiv. 17), is spoken of as if it had an independent mission, like a pestilence or an angel.

6. Whether the prophet warns or not is left to him.

7. There is great dramatic force in this sudden application of the rule to the prophet; iii. 16–21 refers to the prophet himself throughout, chap. xiv is addressed to the false prophets. In any case, the preacher's responsibility for his clearer insight into God's purposes is as great as the hearer's for his knowledge of the prophetic word.

xxxiii. 10–20. *The Community.*

10. The exiles regard themselves as under the anger of Yahweh, pining away in unforgiven sin, and they further (verse

should we live? Say unto them, As I live, saith the 11
Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the
wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live:
turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die,
O house of Israel? And thou, son of man, say unto the 12
children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous
shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression;
and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall
thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness:
neither shall he that is righteous be able to live thereby
in the day that he sinneth. When I say to the righteous, 13
that he shall surely live; if he trust to his righteousness,
and commit iniquity, none of his righteous deeds shall
be remembered; but in his iniquity that he hath committed, therein shall he die. Again, when I say unto 14
the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his
sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked 15
restore the pledge, give again that he had taken by
robbery, walk in the statutes of life, committing no
iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of 16
his sins that he hath committed shall be remembered
against him: he hath done that which is lawful and

20: cf. xviii. 25, 29) accuse Yahweh of inconsistency. Ezekiel replies to both moods by his assertion of Yahweh's unalterable law; to 'justify' God is to receive the first intimations of hope. See also iv. 17; Lev. xxvi. 39; Deut. xxviii. 65.

11. Cf. xviii. 23. Ezekiel is of course thinking here of Israel. For what was happening at the time, and would soon be known to the exiles, cf. Jer. xl–xliv, and lii. 29, 30.

13, 14. God's law is more completely unchanging than his predictions. The latter may be baulked by men; the former, never.

15. The examples of goodness and evil are given much more fully in xviii. 6–9.

16. Cf. Ps. xxv. 7, lxxix. 8, cxxxvii. 7; Isa. lxiv. 9. How this forgetfulness, like so many other aspects of O.T. teaching, is possible,

17 right; he shall surely live. Yet the children of thy
people say, The way of the Lord is not equal: but a
18 for them, their way is not equal. When the righteou
turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity
19 he shall even die therein. And when the wicked turnet
from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful an
20 right, he shall live thereby. Yet ye say, The way of the
Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, I will judge yo
every one after his ways.

21 And it came to pass in the twelfth year of our captivity,
in the tenth *month*, in the fifth *day* of the month, tha
one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me,
22 saying, The city is smitten. Now the hand of the LORD
had been upon me in the evening, afore he that was
escaped came; and he had opened my mouth, until he

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cannot be understood apart from the N.T. There we learn that sin is forgotten because in the acceptance of Christ by faith the old sinful personality ceases to be.

17. See note on verse 10.

xxxiii. 21-29. *The arrival of the news of the city's fall and the opening of the Prophet's mouth.*

21. the twelfth year. The city fell in the middle of the eleventh year. Could eighteen months have been necessary for the news to reach the exiles? Communications were frequent (cf. Jer. xxix). The LXX reads 'tenth year, twelfth month.' There can be little doubt that our text contains an error dependent on the date which is given in xxxii. 1, and that 'eleventh' should be read for 'twelfth'; i. e. Jan. 585.

22. the hand of the LORD: see note on i. 3, iii. 14; for the dumbness, see note on iii. 26. The text seems to imply that the dumbness was removed in the ecstasy that fell upon the prophet from the evening until the morning, and that then (? a second time) his mouth was opened. Presumably, verses 1-20 would be the substance of the prophet's evening discourse; in that case, however, we should have expected a mention of the removal of the dumbness in verse 1. A slight alteration would change 'until' to 'at the time when'; the night's ecstasy would then precede the accession of speech; and verses 1-20 will stand as a general introduction to the section.

came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb. And the word of the LORD 23
came unto me, saying, Son of man, they that inhabit 24
those waste places in the land of Israel speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: but we are many; the land is given us for inheritance. Where- 25
fore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes unto your idols, and shed blood: and shall ye possess the land? Ye 26
stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye defile every one his neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land? Thus shalt thou say unto them, 27
Thus saith the Lord GOD: As I live, surely they that are in the waste places shall fall by the sword, and him that is in the open field will I give to the beasts to be devoured, and they that be in the strong holds and in the caves shall die of the pestilence. And I will make 28
the land a desolation and an astonishment, and the pride of her power shall cease; and the mountains of Israel shall be desolate, that none shall pass through. Then shall they know that I am the LORD, when I have 29
made the land a desolation and an astonishment, because of all their abominations which they have committed. And as for thee, son of man, the children of thy people 30

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24. The reference will be to those who were left with Gedaliah (2 Kings xxv. 22). Few and desolate as they are, with amazing self-confidence they feel themselves many in comparison with Abraham.

25. Cf. xviii. 11; Lev. iii. 17.

28. Whatever be the grounds for hope, nothing is to be expected in the way of mitigation of the doom of the land; the real hope is centred in the exiled community, and rises from the city's fall. 'To have given free scope to the thoughts of prophecy is the historical significance of the destruction of the city and of the national state in 586' (Stade).

xxxiii. 30-33. *Hearers of the Word, and not Doers.*

30. These words may refer to the prophet's general position,

talk of thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word
31 that cometh forth from the LORD. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but do them not: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their
32 heart goeth after their gain. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy
33 words, but they do them not. And when this cometh to pass, (behold, it cometh,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them.

34 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son

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as receiving private visits (cf. viii. 1, xiv. 1), or to his changed position after the news of verse 22 had roused a fresh interest; in any case, he feels now more deeply the need for an active repentance in the people, and their own unwillingness to do more than listen.

by the walls, i. e. in the shade.

31. much love. The word is the same as in verse 32 ('a song of love'), and means properly 'tenderness,' or 'love-passages.' LXX paraphrases to 'because a lie is in their mouth.'

32. Literally, 'thou art to them a love-song, a person with a pleasant voice,' &c. Ezekiel simply means that he receives the same kind of attention as a skilled musical performer, not that his addresses were delivered with any special aesthetic charm.

33. this: the general fulfilment of the prophecies (cf. verse 3), already partially fulfilled: cf. vii. 5. The pointing of the Hebrew text suggests a considerable pause before the parenthesis; 'and when it cometh—behold, it cometh!—then,' &c.

xxxiv. 1-19. *Yahweh, the Good Shepherd.* In this passage Ezekiel has in his mind the oppression of the whole people by tyrannical rulers, and the oppression of the weak or poor among the people by the strong. In the O. T. the two are seldom clearly distinguished. Each kind of oppression is to cease, as Yahweh himself intervenes to punish the guilty, and to do what they had neglected. The passage is elaborated from Jer. xxiii. 1-8, which is combined with the prophecy of the righteous branch (verse 5). The figure of the Shepherd, natural as it might seem, scarcely

of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, even to the shepherds, Thus saith the Lord God: Woe unto the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the sheep? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with 3
the wool, ye kill the fatlings; but ye feed not the sheep.
The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye 4
healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with rigour have ye
ruled over them. And they were scattered, because 5
there was no shepherd: and they became meat to all the
beasts of the field, and were scattered. My sheep 6
wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my sheep were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and there was none that did search or seek
after them. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of 7
the Lord: As I live, saith the Lord God, surely for- 8
asmuch as my sheep became a prey, and my sheep became meat to all the beasts of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for

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occurs before Jeremiah, though fairly common afterwards (1 Kings xxii. 17; Hos. xiii. 6; Jer. xiii. 17, xxiii. 1, xxv. 36, xxxi. 10, l. 19; Isa. xl. 11; Zech. x. 3, xiii. 7; Pss. xxiii, lxxiv. 1; John x). Cf. Matthew Arnold's Sonnet, 'The Good Shepherd with the Kid.' Milton has applied the imagery of the chapter to a selfish and worldly priesthood in *Lycidas*.

2. the shepherds: compare the frequent Homeric expression for the king, 'shepherd of the people.'

3. You have abused your rights, and forgotten your duties.

4. broken: that which has been violently bruised, or fractured. The 'lost' is that which has wandered completely away: cf. Luke xv. 4.

6. How different the tone here ('my sheep') from that of the earlier chapters. See also xx. 28.

8. my shepherds: LXX reads, rightly, '*the* shepherds.'

my sheep, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not
9 my sheep; therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the
10 LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against
the shepherds; and I will require my sheep at their
hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the sheep;
neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more;
and I will deliver my sheep from their mouth, that they
11 may not be meat for them. For thus saith the Lord
GOD: Behold, I myself, even I, will search for my sheep,
12 and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his
flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are
scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep; and I will
deliver them out of all places whither they have been
13 scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring
them out from the peoples, and gather them from the
countries, and will bring them into their own land; and
I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel, by the
watercourses, and in all the inhabited places of the
14 country. I will feed them with good pasture, and upon
the mountains of the height of Israel shall their fold be:
there shall they lie down in a good fold, and on fat
pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.
15 I myself will feed my sheep, and I will cause them to lie
16 down, saith the Lord GOD. I will seek that which was
lost, and will bring again that which was driven away,
and will bind up that which was broken, and will

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10. The shepherds are here addressed as if they were themselves beasts of prey (cf. verse 5). Compare Jeremiah's attack on Jehoiachin (Jer. xxii. 24).

12. The LXX here differs from the Hebrew, and avoids the difficulty of the picture of the shepherd being in the midst of his sheep when the sheep are scattered. We may perhaps read, 'as the shepherd seeketh out his flock on the day when they are scattered,' &c.

13. Figure and reality again dovetail into one another.

strengthen that which was sick: and the fat and the strong I will destroy; I will feed them in judgement.
And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD: 17
Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, as well the
rams as the he-goats. Seemeth it a small thing unto you 18
to have fed upon the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture? and to have drunk of the clear waters, but ye must foul the
residue with your feet? And as for my sheep, they eat 19
that which ye have trodden with your feet, and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD unto them: 20
Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and
the lean cattle. Because ye thrust with side and with 21
shoulder, and push all the diseased with your horns, till

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16. destroy: LXX, with the Vulgate and Luther, by a change of 'd' to 'r,' reads 'guard.' But the thought is now passing from the shepherds to the sheep; of the latter, those who have misused their strength are to be punished like the former. Yahweh does not act like other shepherds, nor like the kings who favour the strong and rich.

in judgement: these words form a striking and effective parallel to 'destroy.' If we read 'guard,' 'in judgement' would have to be taken as meaning 'as is right and just.'

17. cattle: the word used refers comprehensively to animals in a flock, either sheep or goats. Cf. Deut. xiv. 4. For this general attack on the rich, cf. Amos v. 11 ff., vi. 1 ff., and James ii. 6 f., v. 1 ff. Ezekiel is still thinking of the old state of things in Judah, now passed away, even though the responsibility for it remains. The bulk of the inhabitants of Judah against whom he had spoken (cf. chaps. viii, ix, xi) would now be on their way to join the exiles.

18. A double wrong had been committed; the best food had been taken; what could not be used had been fouled.

xxxiv. 20-31. *The New Shepherd and the New Covenant.*

20. cattle: see on verse 17.

21. horns: either of rams or he-goats. However stern Ezekiel's portraiture of Yahweh has seemed, it is brutality and violence which rouses his wrath. Bertholet quotes Nietzsche: 'The lowly

22 ye have scattered them abroad; therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will
23 judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their
24 shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David prince among them; I the LORD have
25 spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of

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are alone the good, the suffering are the only pious; for them alone is blessing: while you, the superior and powerful, are for ever the wicked and damned.' But those who are here condemned are not the strong simply, but the tyrannical; it is the morally fitting whose survival is thus secured. Cf. xvii. 24; Matt. v. 3, 5; Luke i. 51–53.

23. In place of the old shepherds, Yahweh will set up a new one; this is not really inconsistent with verses 11–15; since, to Ezekiel, the Messiah is not the instrument of salvation, but only God's 'vicar on earth' after the salvation is accomplished. When the flock is restored, 'my servant David' is to be placed in charge of it. The Messiah, indeed, plays a smaller part than in Isaiah or Jeremiah; Ezekiel thinks more of the kingdom than of the king. Cf. Riehm, *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 189.

one shepherd: in contrast to the many oppressors, and with a reference, doubtless, to the union of the two kingdoms (cf. xxxvii. 16).

24. prince: the term regularly used in the last nine chapters (xliii. 9, xlv. 8, xlvi. 16); in the restored state, as the head of the civil community, he is subordinate to the priests. It would appear, however, that Ezekiel's thought has not yet advanced so far. To the Jewish mind, the distinction between Yahweh and his representative, as also that between one prince and a succession, or a 'house,' would not be so obvious as to us.

25. covenant of peace: cf. Hos. ii. 19. The denunciations of chap. xvi concluded with the promise of a new covenant (verses 60, 62). Cf. also xxxvii. 26, and Jer. xxxi. 31, 33; also Isa. xlii. 6, liv. 10. In old Semitic practice (Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 481) the victim was cut into two, in order that the parties to the covenant might stand between the portions and so enter into the victim's life; hence, the Hebrew (and Greek) phrase 'to *cut* a covenant.'

evil beasts: doubtless part of the figure, yet a real and literal dread: cf. xiv. 15.

peace, and will cause evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell securely in the wilderness, and sleep
in the woods. And I will make them and the places 26
round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in its season; there shall be
showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall 27
yield its fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be secure in their land; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke, and have delivered them out of the hand of
those that served themselves of them. And they shall 28
no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the earth devour them; but they shall dwell
securely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will 29
raise up unto them a plantation for renown, and they shall be no more consumed with famine in the land,
neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. And 30
they shall know that I the LORD their God am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people,
saith the Lord GOD. And ye my sheep, the sheep of 31
my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord GOD.

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26. my hill: Zion. Contrast xxxiii. 28; in chap. xlvii the whole land is regarded as surrounding Jerusalem. In a dry land like Palestine the shower is the most significant symbol of blessing.

27. The oriental yoke consists of a cross-piece, into which are inserted four bars of wood, enclosing the necks of the oxen. To free these (note the change of figure) Yahweh will not wait to untie the thongs, but will break the bars.

29. plantation for renown: i.e. a planting which shall be renowned far and wide. LXX, by a slight change, reads 'of peace.'

30. Ezekiel here introduces a significant and gracious alteration into his formula 'they shall know that I am Yahweh.'

31. LXX omits 'are men,' which is probably a gloss, reading 'ye are my sheep.' Cf. Pss. lxxiv. 1, c. 3.

35 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me,
2 saying, Son of man, set thy face against mount Seir, and
3 prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord
GOD: Behold, I am against thee, O mount Seir, and I
will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make
4 thee a desolation and an astonishment. I will lay thy cities
waste, and thou shalt be desolate; and thou shalt know
5 that I am the LORD. Because thou hast had a perpetual
enmity, and hast given over the children of Israel to the
power of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the
6 time of the iniquity of the end: therefore, as I live, saith
the Lord GOD, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood

SECTION II. THE RESTORATION (xxxvi. 1—xxxvii. 28).

xxxv. Ezekiel now turns to more immediately practical considerations. Chap. xxxiv suggests the question, 'How can this bright future be realized, if our old foes are still lying in wait for our weakness, and if the land itself is to remain in the desolation which has now fallen on it? And are not we, the people to whom these promises are given, plunged in exile, as hopeless as the grave itself?' The questions are answered one by one; whether they were actually asked by the people or not, they show that the prophet, after his mouth has been opened, is still in the closest touch with the people's thought, and sees clearly, now that the decisive blow has fallen, the need for the most vigorous encouragement.

2. mount Seir: on the east of the Arabah; here used for the whole region inhabited by Edom, whose name is not actually mentioned till verse 13. See notes on xxv. 12. This prophecy is not, however, a mere repetition of the former. Edom is naturally mentioned as the most prominent of the jealous kindred peoples which surrounded the Hebrews (cf. xxxvi. 5); and her fate is regarded here specifically from the point of view of the restoration of Israel. There is of course no thought of a possible salvation for Edom. Cf. Lam. iv. 22.

5. perpetual enmity. Cf. Amos i. 11.

iniquity of the end: properly (as R. V. marg.), the final punishment—the destruction of the city. The phrase has already occurred in xxi. 25.

6. Note the repetition of 'blood' here; the Hebrew word is *dām*; possibly an assonance with Edom is intended. The verse

shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue thee. Thus will I make mount 7
Seir an astonishment and a desolation; and I will cut off from it him that passeth through and him that returneth.
And I will fill his mountains with his slain: in thy hills 8
and in thy valleys and in all thy watercourses shall they fall that are slain with the sword. I will make thee 9
perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not be inhabited: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.
Because thou hast said, These two nations and these 10
two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the LORD was there: therefore, as I live, saith 11
the Lord GOD, I will do according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast shewed out of thy hatred against them; and I will make myself known among them, when I shall judge thee. And thou shalt 12
know that I the LORD have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to

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contains what seem to be two expressions of the same idea; the LXX has only the second half of the verse. See Gen. ix. 6.

thou hast not hated: cf. xi. 8. Smend understands, less naturally, the negative as a question, and equivalent to 'surely thou hast hated blood,' i. e. thine own line, Israel.

9. ye shall know: the subject of the plural is found in the 'mountains' and 'hills' of Edom (verse 8).

10. These two nations: the northern and southern kingdoms. Edom had looked on the fall of Samaria, and then of Jerusalem, as her opportunity (cf. verse 12), forgetting that the land belonged to Yahweh; but though his people had been deported, he was himself still there, i.e. the land belonged to him. The seeming inconsistency between this verse and xi. 23 shows how little Ezekiel intended either representation to be taken literally.

11. among them: an easy change would give 'in the midst of thee'; so the LXX, &c.; but the present reading ('them' = Israel) is quite possible.

12. Since the 'mountains' are Yahweh's, usurpation is blasphemy.

13 devour. And ye have magnified yourselves against me
with your mouth, and have multiplied your words against
14 me: I have heard it. Thus saith the Lord GOD: When
the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate.
15 As thou didst rejoice over the inheritance of the house
of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee:
thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Edom,
even all of it: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

36 And thou, son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of
Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of
2 the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because the
enemy hath said against you, Aha! and, The ancient
3 high places are ours in possession: therefore prophesy,

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14. To what universal rejoicing does this refer? Such an event seems ruled out by chaps. xxv–xxxii. The words might mean, however, as Davidson suggests, 'according to the rejoicing of the whole earth'; i. e. the earth will feel towards Edom as Edom has already felt towards Judah. The thought of the desolation of Edom, thus introduced, is developed in the following verses: cf. especially xxxvi. 5. Edom itself, in comparison even with Judah, was as a matter of fact a bare and desolate region.

xxxvi. 1–7. *Apostrophe of the Land now lying waste.*

1. There is no break at the end of the last chapter, and the connexion of thought is close. As Edom will be destroyed, so the destruction of Israel will be changed to glorious prosperity, and the pollution of the land (caused not only by her own sins, but by the presence of strangers such as Edom) will be cleansed. To Ezekiel the latter is as important as the former. The chapter is the brightest in the whole book.

mountains of Israel: repeated from xxxv. 12; the extraordinary passion of verses 1–7 is all the more noteworthy by the side of Ezekiel's previous denunciations of Israel itself. Compare the outburst in Ps. cxxxvii. 5–7.

2. high places: to the prophets these suggest idolatry; but in the mouth of the 'enemy' they are the hill-strongholds, which would naturally be crowned with shrines or altars; the word occurs in this sense in Mesha's inscription. They are 'ancient,' since in pre-Israelite times, as archaeology has revealed, they already existed as shrines, and probably often as fortresses also.

and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because, even because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the nations, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and the evil report of the people: therefore, ye 4 mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes and to the cities that are forsaken, which are become a prey and derision to the residue of the nations that are round about: therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: 5 Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the nations, and against all Edom, which have appointed my land unto themselves for a possession with the joy of all their heart, with despite of soul, to cast it out for a prey: therefore prophesy concerning the land 6 of Israel, and say unto the mountains and to the hills, to the watercourses and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury, because ye have borne the shame of the heathen: there- 7 fore thus saith the Lord GOD: I have lifted up mine hand, *saying,* Surely the heathen that are round about

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3. **made you desolate.** The Hebrew word is anomalous; possibly we should read 'panted after you.'

the residue, the 'flotsam and jetsam,' and especially Edom herself, left upon the ground after the flood of Babylonian invasion had retired.

4. The fullness of style reveals the heat of the prophet's feeling; cf. chap. 19. Note especially the repeated 'therefore.'

5. **cast it out for a prey:** the expression is strange, alike in Hebrew and English. The LXX suggests that the reading is mistaken; a small change would give 'to despoil it as their booty.'

6. **the shame of the heathen:** the contemptuousness of the derision of the heathen, and the pollution of their presence.

8 you, they shall bear their shame. But ye, O mountains
of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield
your fruit to my people Israel; for they are at hand to
9 come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto
10 you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: and I will multiply
men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it:
and the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places
11 shall be builded: and I will multiply upon you man and
beast; and they shall increase and be fruitful: and I will
cause you to be inhabited after your former estate, and
will do better *unto you* than at your beginnings: and ye
12 shall know that I am the LORD. Yea, I will cause men
to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall
possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and
thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of children.
13 Thus saith the Lord GOD: Because they say unto you,
Thou *land* art a devourer of men, and hast been a bereaver

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xxxvi. 8–15. *The Return to the Land.*

8. at hand. The first intimation of a speedy return; Jeremiah had mentioned seventy years as the duration of absence. This passage reminds us of the second half of Isaiah. For the time—and just when the prospect is gloomiest—Ezekiel's wonted sombreness is completely cast aside.

9. for you: elsewhere, this preposition has a hostile sense.

10. all of it: the northern kingdom as well as the southern. Ezekiel will not have the completeness of the prophecy misunderstood.

11. increase and be fruitful: the promise of Gen. i. 22 and ix. 7. The LXX omits; but the insertion of the words here is a touch of genius.

12. Note the change from plural to singular.

bereave them of children: how had the land been as a wild beast (verse 13) to its inhabitants (cf. Num. xiii. 32)? Probably, by the wars and pestilences, for which, in the prophet's eyes, the people themselves were responsible. After 586 B.C. the language of verse 13 was natural enough to the exiles. The 'reproach of famine' (verse 30), though deserved, is no more to be endured by Israel, or by Yahweh.

of thy nation; therefore thou shalt devour men no more, 14
neither bereave thy nation any more, saith the Lord GOD;
neither will I let thee hear any more the shame of the 15
heathen, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the
peoples any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nation to
stumble any more, saith the Lord GOD.

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 16
Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own 17
land, they defiled it by their way and by their doings:
their way before me was as the uncleanness of a woman
in her separation. Wherefore I poured out my fury upon 18
them for the blood which they had poured out upon the
land, and because they had defiled it with their idols:

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xxxvi. 16-38. *The Inner Meaning of God's Dealings with His People.* Cf. xx. 39-44, and see Introd. p. 36. The punishment of Israel, inevitable if Yahweh was to be known as moral, made him, in the eyes of the nations, appear weak; while to restore the people whom he had punished might make him appear equally weak (as being easily turned from his purpose) or equally non-moral. The prophet elevates the whole proceeding into the sphere of the religious by approaching it from the standpoint of purity, ceremonial and moral. The uncleanness of their sin was the real cause of their ejection; that Yahweh's name might not thus be any longer dishonoured, he would freely forgive them and reinstate them in his land; there he would purify them by the outpouring of his own spirit and surround them with new mercies: thus would they come to true penitence, and in their new estate his name would be glorified. Paul's order (Rom. vi-viii) is exactly the same—forgiveness, regeneration, the gift of the Spirit of God as the ruling power in the heart, and the new righteousness (see A. B. Davidson's *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 343). Ezekiel is still thinking of the nation as a whole; but the process holds entirely of the individual; and here, as nowhere else, with equal completeness, the ceremonial is merged in the moral; the religious embraces both. But even yet the love which is 'commended' to sinners is hidden from Ezekiel's eyes.

17. Cf. Jer. ii. 7; Isa. lxiv. 6. Ezekiel uses the strongest possible term for the filthiness of sin.

18. Cf. xvi. 36, xxiii. 37.

19 and I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and
20 according to their doings I judged them. And when they came unto the nations, whither they went, they profaned my holy name; in that men said of them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land.
21 But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations, whither they went.
22 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD: I do not *this* for your sake, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name, which ye have profaned among
23 the nations, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their
24 eyes. For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into
25 your own land. And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and

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20. Sin is not only evil in itself, but it compels God to do what men are bound to misunderstand. God's name is profaned not only when his people sin, but when they force him to punish them. Cf. xx. 9, xxii. 16, xxxix. 7.

21. Characteristically, Ezekiel feels that it is God's own name, and not Israel, which God pities. What had Israel done to deserve such pity?

23. sanctify, i. e. make holy (cf. verse 22). The great act of reinstatement would make the heathen honour God's majesty, as the sufferings of Israel had made them despise it.

my . . . name, see Introd., p. 35.

25. To the Hebrew the worship of idols involved acts of both ritual and moral uncleanness; the idea of cleansing was thus common to both spheres. Antiquity was not wont to make a very clear distinction between symbol and reality. In Babylon, as in quite savage cults, ceremonial lustration by water is found. Cf. Zech. xiii. 1; Ps. li. 7; Num. viii. 7.

from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also 26
will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you:
and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and
I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my 27
spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes,
and ye shall keep my judgements, and do them. And ye 28
shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye
shall be my people, and I will be your God. And I will 29
save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call
for the corn, and will multiply it, and lay no famine upon
you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and 30
the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no
more the reproach of famine among the nations. Then 31
shall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that
were not good; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your
own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.
Not for your sake do I *this*, saith the Lord GOD, be it 32

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26. See note on xi. 19, of which this passage is an almost verbal reproduction. There the promise is followed by a threat; here, by a remarkable expansion, the reference to the spirit being elaborated in xxxvii. 1-14, which answers the natural question, 'How is this national conversion to be wrought?' It is only when the old bad nature has been removed that the blessings of restoration can be enjoyed.

27. my spirit: an element in the conversion not mentioned in xi. 20; the new 'breath' is to be nothing less than God's breath.

28. ye shall dwell: another promise that could not have been made in chap. xi. Ezekiel is still thinking of the nation; cf. Exod. xx. 12. Ezekiel here alone (not in xxxvii. 23) uses the longer form of the personal pronoun, which, however, is used in this phrase by other prophets, whom he must have had in mind (Hos. i. 9; Jer. xi. 4, xxx. 22).

31. In vi. 9 this self-loathing is predicted for the fragments of the nation which are scattered in exile. That repentance (as here) is brought about by renewed kindness is a psychological truth of great importance.

32. Cf. verse 22. If the gift of the 'new heart' is to be preserved, those who receive it must understand the evil of the

known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your
33 ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord GOD: In
the day that I cleanse you from all your iniquities, I will
cause the cities to be inhabited, and the waste places
34 shall be builded. And the land that was desolate shall
be tilled, whereas it was a desolation in the sight of all
35 that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was
desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the
waste and desolate and ruined cities are fenced and
36 inhabited. Then the nations that are left round about
you shall know that I the LORD have builded the ruined
places, and planted that which was desolate: I the LORD
have spoken it, and I will do it.

37 Thus saith the Lord GOD: For this moreover will I be
inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I
38 will increase them with men like a flock. As the flock
for sacrifice, as the flock of Jerusalem in her appointed
feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of
men: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

37 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he carried

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past. Cf. Charles Wesley's lines: 'Show me, as my soul can bear, The depth of inbred sin.'

36. Again, Ezekiel is left far behind by Paul; cf. Rom. xi. 12.

37. This concluding promise would be specially appreciated by the exiles. The population after 586 B.C. would seem decimated; hence the prediction is added that the inhabitants shall be as numerous as the sheep which Ezekiel would remember as pressing upon one another on festival days when driven up for sacrifices: cf. Amos iv. 4, v. 22; Isa. i. 11, and 1 Chron. xxix. 21. The promise of future population is repeated in xxxvii. 26 and Zech. ii. 4.

xxxvii. 1–14. After the foregoing wide promise of restoration, the details of the central element in the process are seen in a vision, which offers a parallel and an equally striking contrast to Isa. liii. There, the Servant, afflicted with a leprous plague, is watched by those whose salvation is being won by his own sufferings and death, and, after death, he sees the travail of his soul;

me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the
midst of the valley; and it was full of bones; and he 2
caused me to pass by them round about: and behold,
there were very many in the open valley; and lo, they
were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can 3
these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou
knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophesy over these 4
bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word
of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones: 5
Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall
live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up 6
flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath

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here, the prophet beholds the nation itself dead, as it were, in exile, and then, through the gift of the spirit already announced in xxxvi. 26, rising to new life. See Introd., p. 19. Dan. xii. 2 repeats the promise of a resurrection, but that chapter combines the predictions of Ezek. xxxvii with that of xxxviii and xxxix, and is contemplating the rise of those who had fallen martyrs in the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes: cf. Rev. vii. 14. Ezekiel is not here considering the problem of Job or of Ps. lxxiii (which goes far beyond ordinary Judaism), viz., how can the suffering of the pious individual be explained? But literature offers no nobler picture of a national resurrection: cf. Isa. xxvi. 14, 19. The whole description is a marvel of combined brevity and vividness.

1. The hand of the LORD: cf. i. 3, iii. 14, viii. 1, and xl. 1. Here, as in the concluding vision, all reference to external signs of ecstasy or trance is absent. Contrast iv. 4.

he carried me out: cf. iii. 22. The bones of Gog also lie in the midst of a valley (xxxix. 11), which would be the natural site of a battle; cf. also Jer. xxxi. 40.

3. Yahweh does not answer his own question, but makes the prophet answer it, or rather bring about its answer.

4. The prophet is thus compelled to assume a potentiality of life in the unburied and dried-up bones.

5. The LXX reads simply, 'I will cause to enter into you the breath of life.' For 'breath' and 'spirit' the Hebrew uses one word; the whole passage is the direct reverse of the words Tennyson attributes to Nature—'The spirit does but mean the breath.'

in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am
7 the LORD. So I prophesied as I was commanded:
and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold an
earthquake, and the bones came together, bone to his
8 bone. And I beheld, and lo, there were sinews upon
them, and flesh came up, and skin covered them above:
9 but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me,
Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say
to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Come from the
four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that
10 they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me,
and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood
11 up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said
unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of
Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried up, and
12 our hope is lost; we are clean cut off. Therefore prophesy,

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7. a noise: *lit.* 'a voice'; its use in Ps. xxix has suggested the R.V. margin 'thundering.' 'Sound' would express the meaning better, since the word neither necessitates nor rules out the articulate. The LXX omits the word.

an earthquake: *lit.* 'a shaking,' used of chariots (Nah. iii. 2; Jer. xlvii. 3), of battle (Isa. ix. 4; Jer. x. 22), or of the brandishing of a spear (Job xli. 21), as well as of actual earthquake (1 Kings xix. 11; Amos i. 1). Here, of the sudden thrill which runs over the whole field of bones.

8. Ezekiel prepares the way for the description of the actual coming of the breath with distinct literary art.

9. wind: still the same word which in this chapter and elsewhere is translated 'breath' and 'spirit.' All the winds of heaven are needed to animate the army of the dead ('these slain').

10. Cf. xxxvi. 27. In Gen. ii. 7 Yahweh breathes his breath directly into man; here, the result is obtained through the prophet's summons to the breath, or wind, of the air; Yahweh refrains from direct action. Though the prophet feels himself an insignificant 'son of man' before God, he has the highest conception of the importance which God attaches to his office: cf. Rom. xi. 13.

11. For this quotation from popular speech, cf. xviii. 2, xxxiii. 17. For the exiles' depression, cf. xxxiii. 10.

12. Those who are thus to rise are already physically alive;

and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, 13
when I have opened your graves, and caused you to come up out of your graves, O my people. And I will put my 14
spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, 15
And thou, son of man, take thee one stick, and write 16
upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and *for* all the house of Israel his companions: and join them for thee one to 17
another into one stick, that they may become one in thine

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as the rest of the chapter shows, they are to be restored as a living nation (cf. verse 14). Ultimately, Ezekiel's faith rests on the same grounds as faith in an individual resurrection; God's purposes are too gracious and firm to be broken by national disaster or physical death. The exile begot both faiths, but the latter only arose when the former became impossible or unsatisfying.

your graves: your exile. In the vision there were no graves.

xxxvii. 15-28. The prophecy now culminates in the definite announcement of the reunion of the two kingdoms.

16. The division of the realm of David into two is regarded by the great prophets as a national calamity; but only after the exile was the action of the ten tribes felt to be schismatic. Before then 'Ephraim' (the leading tribe until the rise of David brought Judah into prominence) was regarded as pre-eminent in influence or in misfortune rather than in wickedness. Cf. xvi. 51. The constant use of the term 'Israel' shows how little the 'rejection' of Ephraim had entered into the mind of the prophets. Cf. Hos. ii. 2, iii. 5; Isa. xi. 13; Mic. ii. 12, iv. 7; Jer. iii. 11, xiii. 11; and Ezek. xlvii. 13.

stick: this symbolizes the royal 'rod' or 'sceptre' (cf. verse 19).

18 hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak
unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou
19 meanest by these? say unto them, Thus saith the Lord
GOD: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in
the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his
companions; and I will put them with it, *even* with the
stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall
20 be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou
21 writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. And say
unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will
take the children of Israel from among the nations,
whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side,
22 and bring them into their own land: and I will make
them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of
Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and
they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be
23 divided into two kingdoms any more at all: neither shall
they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor
with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions:
but I will save them out of all their dwelling
places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them:
so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

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18. Cf. xii. 9.

19. in mine hand: LXX reads 'in the hand of Judah.' This does not correspond to verse 16; moreover, in spite of the mention of David in verse 24 and xxxiv. 23, Ezekiel nowhere gives Judah a special pre-eminence: he is 'a Pan-Israelite of the purest water' (Kraetzschmar). We should probably read, 'I will put them (Joseph and the tribes of Israel) upon the stick of Judah, and they shall be one stick in my hand.'

21. Cf. verse 14.

22. king: elsewhere Ezekiel avoids this term; here it expresses the majesty of the reunited kingdom. See note on vii. 27.

23. dwelling places: as R. V. margin and LXX, 'backslidings' or 'rebelliousnesses' should be read.

And my servant David shall be king over them; and 24
they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in
my judgements, and observe my statutes, and do them.
And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto 25
Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they
shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their
children's children, for ever: and David my servant shall
be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a 26
covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting
covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply
them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for
evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; and 27
I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And 28
the nations shall know that I am the LORD that sanctify
Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them
for evermore.

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son **38**

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24. Cf. notes on xxxiv. 23, xliii. 7. Members of Zedekiah's family may still have been alive (cf. Jer. xliii. 6), but the prophet pays no attention to them. 'David' means one who is like the son of Jesse in the principles of his government.

25. Jacob: the patriarch himself, not his descendants.

26. Cf. xxxiv. 25, xliii. 7.

27. tabernacle, i. e. dwelling-place.

28. God sets Israel apart, unpolluted, for himself, as is shown by Israel's cultus, and its possession of the visible sanctuary. This separation of Israel is itself a means of Yahweh's self-revelation to the nations.

SECTION III. THE FINAL DELIVERANCE (xxxviii. 1—xxxix. 29).

Chap. xxxvii would naturally lead on at once to the description of the new régime in Palestine; the neighbours of Israel (even Edom) are now powerless, and Israel herself is repentant and regenerated. But the preparation is not yet complete. The vast and mysterious forces of the world's barbarism must be destroyed before Israel's peace is unshakable. Ezekiel therefore describes an irruption of the hordes who range themselves under 'Gog'; these sweep upon Yahweh's land; they meet their destruction of man, set thy face toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the

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there at his hand, and all that Israel has to do is to bury the multitudes of the slain. The 'Scythians' had invaded Western Asia in the time of Josiah (Herod. i. 73, 103–106: cf. Jer. i. 15), and the memory of these barbarians, as terrifying and destructive as the armies of Attila 'the scourge of God,' would be still fresh in Ezekiel's mind. A second and still more terrible invasion he regarded as already predicted (xxxviii. 19, xxxix. 8: cf. Jer. vi. 22). Whether he thought of this event as in the near or distant future is not clear (note, however, xxxviii. 8, 16); probably the question of the actual date was of as little importance to him as to the other prophets. The event, however, will be the final calamity, and the final revelation of Yahweh's supremacy to the world.

This passage is the first definite appearance in the O. T. of what is known as 'apocalyptic' (see Introd., p. 23). As prophecy proper passes into apocalyptic, the clearest details come to be found in its references, not to the present but to the future.

The idea of these chapters is developed in Daniel and in Rev. xx. 7–10, and in this last passage it has given rise to the conception of a millenium (cf. xxxviii. 8), an interval of a thousand years between the first appearance of Christ (which corresponds to the return to Palestine in chaps. xxxvi, xxxvii) and the invasion of the hosts of evil (the irruption of 'Gog'). Gunkel and Gressmann, referring to xxxviii. 17, &c., hold that the eschatology of the prophets presupposes an older popular eschatology—that the 'day of Yahweh' was originally thought of as the end of the world; then, by the earlier prophets, as Yahweh's judgement on his people (cf. note on xiii. 5), and, by Ezekiel and his successors, as the final world-judgement symbolized here by the destruction of Gog. Ezekiel, we know, was not uninfluenced by popular thought (cf. notes on chap. xxviii), but we cannot interpret prophetic thought by supposed conceptions of which we have no definite information. To a mind on fire with the conviction that Yahweh was bound ultimately to manifest his glory, the startling political transformations culminating in Ezekiel's age would easily suggest a final calamity and an enduring peace.

xxxviii. 1–13. *The Gathering of the Horde.*

2. Gog, of the land of Magog: cf. Rev. xx. 8, 'Gog and Magog.' Gog is regarded as already existing; but the name cannot be regarded as applied to the Chaldaeans (as Ewald suggested), since the whole description is of a savage horde, and the Chaldaeans themselves are nowhere thus attacked. The origin of the term Gog is uncertain; it is, however, mentioned in the Tel-el-Amarna letters as the unknown land in the north;

prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy
against him, and say, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, 3
I am against thee, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and
Tubal: and I will turn thee about, and put hooks into 4
thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army,
horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armour,
a great company with buckler and shield, all of them
handling swords: Persia, Cush, and Put with them; all 5
of them with shield and helmet: Gomer, and all his 6
hordes; the house of Togarmah in the uttermost parts
of the north, and all his hordes: even many peoples with
thee. Be thou prepared, yea, prepare thyself, thou, and 7
all thy companies that are assembled unto thee, and be
thou a guard unto them. After many days thou shalt be 8

Haupt suggests that it is an appellative like *Great Mogul* or *Grand Turk.* 'Magog' (a land, not a person) is probably here a gloss, inserted from Gen. x. 2, where it would appear to be the result of a textual corruption.

Rosh: a word which in Hebrew means 'head'; hence R. V. marg., 'chief prince of Meshech.' If it is a proper name, the region is unknown. Dubious identifications have been suggested with 'Tiras' of Gen. x. 2, and with a mediaeval name for the ancestors of the Russians.

Meshech and Tubal: cf. note on xxvii. 13.

4. hooks: cf. xxix. 4. Here, Yahweh leads the host on their expedition; they do not need to be dragged (like Pharaoh in chap. xxix), except that they are really being led to their fate. LXX omits the words.

5. Cf. xxvii. 10, xxx. 5. Actual though far-off peoples from Asia Minor, Africa, South Arabia (the circle of Phoenician commerce) are here joined with the quasi-mythical Gog. In this respect Ezekiel differs noticeably from the Apocalypse.

6. Gomer (Gen. x. 2) is to be identified with the Cimmerians, a name for the Armenians (cf. Homer, *Odyssey* xi. 14). On Togarmah, see note on xxvii. 14.

7. a guard: LXX reads 'be to me a reserve,' which seems to be borne out by verse 8. A change of one letter gives the easier reading of R. V. marg., 'a commander.'

8. After many days, i. e. after Israel has for some time dwelt in peace.

visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, that is gathered out of many peoples, upon the mountains of Israel, which have been a continual waste: but it is brought forth out of the peoples, and they shall dwell securely, all of them.
9 And thou shalt ascend, thou shalt come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all
10 thy hordes, and many peoples with thee. Thus saith the Lord GOD: It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come into thy mind, and thou shalt devise an evil
11 device: and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at quiet, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls,
12 and having neither bars nor gates: to take the spoil and to take the prey; to turn thine hand against the waste places that are *now* inhabited, and against the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the middle of the earth.

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visited, approached, not to be punished, but to be marshalled for the invasion of the land which has been restored from the desolation of war and exile. For the fullness of the expression, cf. xxxvi. 34-36.

9. Cf. Jer. iv. 13. How can it be just that Yahweh should himself lead the barbarians to a crime for which he destroys them? To the Hebrews, God is the ultimate cause of all things; if the savage comes, God must have brought him; if he is destroyed, God must have planned to destroy him. The dilemma is one from which modern theology has found no completely satisfactory escape; it can only affirm, with the O. T., that God's foreknowledge and causality do not annul man's responsibility. Cf. the following verse; the wild thoughts are Gog's.

11. without walls: hence in a time of deep peace. Cf. Jer. xlix. 31. There is no real inconsistency between this and xxxvi. 35 ('fenced').

12. cattle suggests the older ideal of an agricultural Israel.

middle (R. V. marg., 'navel'; cf. v. 5) denotes the high land forming the backbone of Palestine, on which Israel's hold had always been the strongest. The word occurs in Judges ix. 37.

Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with 13
all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou
come to take the spoil? hast thou assembled thy company
to take the prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take
away cattle and goods, to take great spoil?

Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, 14
Thus saith the Lord GOD: In that day when my people
Israel dwelleth securely, shalt thou not know it? And 15
thou shalt come from thy place out of the uttermost parts
of the north, thou, and many peoples with thee, all of
them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty
army: and thou shalt come up against my people Israel, 16
as a cloud to cover the land; it shall come to pass in the
latter days, that I will bring thee against my land, that
the nations may know me, when I shall be sanctified in
thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord 17
GOD: Art thou he of whom I spake in old time by my
servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those
days for *many* years that I would bring thee against them?

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13. Cf. notes on xxvii. 15, 22. Sheba &c., expect to get their advantage out of this huge raid. The 'great spoil' hints at the future prosperity of the country.

young lions must be wrong; 'jackals' would be more appropriate! One of the usual words for 'merchant' would hardly have been thus altered, as has been suggested; possibly a proper name (as 'Cyprians') originally stood in the text.

xxxviii. 14-23. *The Destruction of the Horde.*

14. know, probably, with LXX, 'be aroused.'

16. Since holiness is the special mark of divinity (see Introd., p. 24), we may paraphrase, with H. P. Smith, 'when I show my divinity before their eyes.' Cf. note on xxxvi. 20.

17. for many years: properly, 'years long'; the prophecies had been often repeated. To what does Ezekiel refer? Similar prophecies are found in Isa. xvii. 12; Mic. v. 11; Joel ii. 2; Zeph. iii. 8; Zech. xii. 3 ff.; none of which, however, are certainly pre-exilic. Jer. vi. 22 is more explicit, though this might easily be understood of the Chaldaeans. Possibly Ezekiel refers to a more

18 And it shall come to pass in that day, when Gog shall
come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that
19 my fury shall come up into my nostrils. For in my
jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely
in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of
20 Israel; so that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the
heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping
things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are
upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence,
and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep
places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.
21 And I will call for a sword against him unto all my
mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall
22 be against his brother. And I will plead against him with
pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him,
and upon his hordes, and upon the many peoples that
are with him, an overflowing shower, and great hailstones,
23 fire, and brimstone. And I will magnify myself, and
sanctify myself, and I will make myself known in the
eyes of many nations; and they shall know that I am
the Lord.

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widely spread expectation. He alone of O. T. prophets contains this double anticipation of mediate and final deliverance.

19. shaking: the same word was used in xxxvii. 7 (see note). The earthquake is a common element in apocalyptic pictures: cf. Hag. ii. 6; Matt. xxiv. 7.

21. a sword: 'sword' and 'my mountains' are very similar in Hebrew; and LXX, omitting both, reads another and not dissimilar word, 'terror,' which may be right; the 'terrors' are described in the following words. As the text stands, the foe has spread over the mountains of Yahweh's land, whither the sword will be summoned against him.

23. Yahweh is revealed in destruction, as in blessing (xxxvii. 28). Winckler regards this chapter, like the following, as referring to Alexander the Great, and as composed between the battles of the Granicus and Issus (between 334-333 B.C.), as an up-to-date application of the Babylonian Tiamat-myth (cf. note on

And thou, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, 39
Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against thee, O
Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal: and I will 2
turn thee about, and will lead thee on, and will cause
thee to come up from the uttermost parts of the north;
and I will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel: and 3
I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause
thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall 4
upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy hordes,
and the peoples that are with thee: I will give thee
unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts
of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the 5
open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God.
And I will send a fire on Magog, and on them that dwell 6
securely in the isles: and they shall know that I am the
Lord. And my holy name will I make known in the 7
midst of my people Israel; neither will I suffer my holy

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xxix. 3). How a Jewish writer of the fourth century should so have misunderstood Alexander's purpose, and why (and when) the passage, once written, was inserted here, are far from intelligible.

xxxix. 1–10. *The Destruction of the Invaders.* Ezekiel here starts from the same point as in chap. xxxviii, but now dwells upon the disaster that is to befall the host.

1. Cf. xxxviii. 2, 3; the mention of Magog is here omitted.

2. lead: the verb does not occur elsewhere; but its meaning is plain.

the mountains of Israel: cf. xxxviii. 21. Most invaders would be content with ravaging the plains; this horde leaves no hilly spot untouched.

3. Herodotus's word for the Scythians is 'mounted archers.'

4. As before Jericho, Israel itself does not need to fight.

6. Yahweh will show his might in Gog's own land, as well as in Israel. The 'isles,' if not purely a general term, were perhaps the islands in the Mediterranean.

7. suffer . . to be profaned: *lit.* 'cause to be profaned,' a bold phrase, from which the LXX has shrunk, translating it 'shall be profaned.'

name to be profaned any more: and the nations shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel.
8 Behold, it cometh, and it shall be done, saith the Lord
9 GOD; this is the day whereof I have spoken. And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall make fires of the weapons and burn them, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall make fires of
10 them seven years: so that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall make fires of the weapons: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord GOD.

11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place for burial in Israel, the valley of them that pass through on the east of the sea: and it shall

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8. Cf. xxxviii. 17.

9. Canaan was poor in wood; as this invasion is to be followed by unbroken peace the weapons can be safely used as fuel. For the 'seven years,' cf. verse 12, 'seven months.' The number 'seven' is common in all apocalyptic writings; see especially Revelation, *passim*. Seven weapons are here catalogued (including the first and general term).

10. Cf. Isa. xxxiii. 1, and the moral of the story of Esther. In the national sufferings during and after the exile the principle of the *lex talionis* would naturally be found consolatory.

xxxix. 11–16. *The Burial of the Slain.*

11. a place for burial: to this the Hebrew adds 'there' (inserted in the A. V.), which the LXX pointed as 'renowned,' viz. for the burial of so mighty a host; cf. verse 13. This place is east of the Dead Sea, outside the proper—and holy—territory of Israel.

them that pass through: this appears to point forward,' somewhat clumsily, to the next clause and to verse 14; the consonants, however, can be read as 'the valley of the Abarim. Mount Abarim (Num. xxvii. 12, xxxiii. 47) is at the north-west of the plateau of Moab, east of the Dead Sea; a 'valley of Abarim' may have existed as well.

stop them that pass through: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it The valley of Hamon-gog. And seven months shall the house 12 of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land. Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; 13 and it shall be to them a renown, in the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD. And they shall sever 14 out men of continual employment, that shall pass through the land to bury them that pass through, that remain upon the face of the land, to cleanse it: after the end of seven months shall they search. And they that pass 15 through the land shall pass through; and when any seeth a man's bone, then shall he set up a sign by it, till the buriers have buried it in the valley of Hamon-gog. And 16 Hamonah shall also be the name of a city. Thus shall they cleanse the land.

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it shall stop: this is more natural than the A. V. ('it shall stop the noses of the passengers,' which Ewald also preferred) or the suggestion of the LXX ('Israel shall block up the mouth of the valley').

multitude: the Hebrew word is *Hamon*.

12. seven months: see verse 9. Corpses, especially of the heathen, are a defilement.

13. people of the land: a term increasingly frequent in later Hebrew for the 'laity,' or the unlearned, as opposed to priests and students of the law or 'scribes.'

14. continual, i. e. continuous or constant; verse 15 explains verse 14. After the seven months, in which the whole people is employed in the work of burial, certain individuals are selected to search the country for unburied corpses; where a bone is seen, a sign is set up for the 'buriers' to come and bury it, to guard against the least pollution. With LXX and R. V. marg., we must omit 'that pass through,' and since these men are distinct from the 'buriers,' 'to bury' should probably be changed to 'to search for.' This piece of detail is quite in the manner of the grave and practical Ezekiel.

16. Cf. verse 11. The words as they stand, however, can hardly be right; if they are not a gloss, the original text is beyond recovery.

17 And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord God: Speak unto the birds of every sort, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of
18 Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of
19 bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken,
20 of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. And ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God.
21 And I will set my glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see my judgement that I have executed,
22 and my hand that I have laid upon them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God, from
23 that day and forward. And the nations shall know that

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xxxix. 17-24. *The Sacrificial Feast, and Yahweh's 'Theodicy.'*

17. Cf. xxxii. 4; Jer. xlvi. 10; Isa. xxxiv. 6; Zeph. iii. 8; Rev. xix. 17. In the more primitive Semitic religion, sacrifice was connected with feasting; cf. 1 Sam. ix. 13, &c. To an Israelite, the sacrifice here described is a grim parody of the true sacrifice, since the 'guests' drink the blood, a rite absolutely forbidden in Israel.

18. By a sudden change of figure the fallen captains are spoken of as sacrificial animals. Bashan was the great pasture-land of Palestine.

19. As in the days of the old sacrifices in Israel (cf. Amos ii. 8; Isa. xxviii. 8), the feast becomes an orgy.

20. Ezekiel does not shrink from reminding us that at this scene of repletion Yahweh is the host (cf. verse 17); it is *his* table.

22 ff. This 'crowning mercy' will not only establish the confidence of Israel in Yahweh; the nations, who can learn of Yahweh only through Israel, will recognize, after such a signal deliverance, that the reason of the calamities of Israel was not Yahweh's weakness but Israel's own sin—that is, Yahweh's righteous reaction against that sin.

the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they trespassed against me, and I hid my face from them: so I gave them into the hand of their adversaries, and they fell all of them by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their 24 transgressions did I unto them; and I hid my face from them.

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD: Now will I bring 25 again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for my holy name. And they shall bear their shame, and all their 26 trespasses whereby they have trespassed against me, when they shall dwell securely in their land, and none shall make them afraid; when I have brought them again from 27 the peoples, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, in 28 that I caused them to go into captivity among the nations, and have gathered them unto their own land; and I will leave none of them any more there; neither will I hide 29 my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.

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xxxix. 25–29. *Final Description of the Future.* Like the 'coda' of a musical composition this passage contains all the chief 'motives' of the whole section (chaps. xxxiii–xxxix); the divine mercy shown in Israel's restoration; the holiness of Yahweh's own 'name'; the repentance and humiliation which follow the restoration; Yahweh's self-manifestation thereby both to Israel and to the world; and his abiding presence henceforth in the midst of his people. Thus Ezekiel reaches the 'C major of this life.'

26. they shall bear: the change of a single point would yield 'forget'; but this 'thorn in the promise' is characteristic of Ezekiel (cf. xxxvi. 31), and is not really a threat, but a preservative; see Introd., p. 39.

29. for I have poured out: the 'for' is important; since Israel has received Yahweh's spirit, it can sin no more. Cf. John

40 In the five and twentieth year of our captivity, in the

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i. 13; 1 John iii. 9. 'God does not only work upon the Christian and leave him. The germ of the new life is that out of which the mature man will in due time be developed' (Westcott, *ad loc.*).

Like the later prophet of the exile, Ezekiel leaps forward in thought to a period in which the immediate deliverance from exile and invasion is identified with the consummation of all things,—future alike to Paul and to us. After the Jews had dwelt quietly in Palestine for three hundred years, a period of Hellenizing began, urged on by the Seleucids, till it was broken by the revolt of the Maccabeans against Antiochus Epiphanes. Later on the Maccabeans themselves provoked a reaction, and their party, as 'Sadducees,' found themselves in sympathy with the Gentiles, and ranged against the Pharisees, the people, and the law. Only twice were the two parties united—once against Jesus, and once, when all party distinctions were obliterated, in the final struggle with Rome. For the prophets it was enough to be convinced that out of the present distresses a deliverance would be vouchsafed, and that God's mercy and power would be revealed beyond the possibility of mistake; and such has been the faith, after the coming of the Messiah, of the Christian Church.

DIVISION III. THE ORDERING OF THE NATION (xl-xlviii).

Eleven years elapse between chaps. xxxix and xl. No other date is given after that in xl. 1; the nine chapters evidently form one vision, and they will therefore, neglecting the fragment in xxix. 17-20, give us Ezekiel's latest discourse. We need not suppose that he had been silent throughout the interval; but chap. xxxix, whether later than xxxiii. 21 ff. or not, contains the last prophetic word to the exiles, and, with rare exceptions (xliii. 9 ff. and xliv. 6), what follows is not a prophetic address, but a detailed 'constitution.' Ezekiel did not indeed cease, with the utterance of chap. xxxix, to be the pastor and the statesman; he had pondered long over the established order of things which was to follow the final deliverance from Gog, and now at last he is ready to show how the new Israel is to live a life in which the old profanations of Yahweh's holiness will be impossible. Ezekiel's scheme (see Introd., p. 26 ff.) is of the greatest importance for the history of the Jewish law; he makes no actual reference to any existing law, or to any previous temple; but, on the other hand, he implies the existence of both, and, while building upon the past, he silently introduces many innovations (see notes on xliii. 7, xliv. 10, 24, xlv. 18, xlvi. 2, &c.). How far did he hope that his scheme would be carried out? Clearly, he looked forward to a restoration of the kind which actually came about, wherein the beginning of the year, in the tenth *day* of the month, in

nation, robbed of its political independence, would be able to devote itself with new zeal to the duties of religion. At the same time, as a priest, he could speak with a tone of authority; it had been, as he expected it would still be, the duty of the priests to instruct the mass of the people on the actual subjects with which these chapters deal (xliv. 23); while the similarity of these chapters to the latter half of Leviticus suggests (see Introd., p. 31) that Ezekiel was working with other priests, whose numbers, and possibly whose eagerness, would be increased after the destruction of the temple in 586 B.C.

The whole section is described as a vision; there are no traces of the abnormal ecstatic condition such as occur in the earlier half of the book; and, indeed, the precise descriptions, which imply that a diagram was, or had been, before his eyes, show that this vision, like that of Dante, had been prepared for by long and patient thought and elaboration. Yet there is nothing psychologically impossible in conceiving that after this preparation the vision rose before Ezekiel's mind as a completed whole, and that he felt himself conducted through the building, which he had come to know so well, by a heavenly guide. Some such experience is implied by the form of the narrative, and will perhaps account for the brevity and obscurity of certain parts.[1] This final vision will then be similar to the opening vision of the Divine Throne-car (see note *ad loc.*). Nor is it inconsistent with a vision or trance-experience that the scope should be enlarged until, passing far beyond the limits of human eyesight, it includes the whole land in its sweep. The vision divides itself into three parts—the temple, the temple ritual, and the people and the land. Throughout, nothing but purely religious subjects are discussed; the secular, so prominent in the Book of the Covenant, is left entirely on one side, save for the statement that the priests are to act as judges. Civil and criminal laws are untouched; the civil functions of the prince are left unregulated; and the

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[1] Gerrard Winstanley, the 'Digger' or 'Leveller' (*floruit* c. 1648-51), thus describes his state of mind when his convictions were 'revealed' (as he considered) to him: 'As I was in a trance, not long since, divers matters were present to my sight, which here must not be related—likewise I heard these words. [Here follow certain injunctions.] After I was raised up I was made to remember very fresh what I had seen or heard, and did declare all things to them that were with me, and I was filled with abundance of quiet peace and secret joy.' The ideas received contain principles of social and theological reform at once sane and astonishingly in advance of his own time. See L. H. Behrens, *The Digger Movement* (London, 1906).

the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, in the

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domains of clergy and laity alike are strictly subordinated to their religious position in the nation. The reason is clear. Ezekiel emphasizes, as it had never been emphasized before, the distinction between priests and people; but only that the priestly character of the nation may be preserved. The spectacle of a whole nation, clear from all taint of profaneness, given up to the service of Yahweh, would indeed enable the Gentiles to understand the meaning of the words 'I am Yahweh'; and for Israel, freedom from ritual uncleanness was absolutely necessary if Yahweh was to dwell in their midst. To us the scheme here outlined may appear antiquated or unreal; to Ezekiel it was one long protest against the licentiousness and greed, the tyranny, and the laxness, which had debased the old popular religion; and the truest religion of the spirit (cf. John iv. 24) will need the preservative of some method and established order and practice, whether for communities or individuals.

SECTION I. THE TEMPLE (xl–xlii).

The prophet finds himself confronted by an angel on the outside of the rebuilt temple, and is led through the gateway of the outer court into the court itself (xl. 1–27); he then passes to a gateway opposite him, and is led into the inner court (xl. 28–47); the structure of the temple itself is then revealed to him, as well as the buildings connected with it (xl. 48—xli. 26); and lastly he is shown the other buildings in the inner court, and learns the dimensions of the whole (chap. xlii). While special attention is given to the entrance-gates, the dimensions of the courts, and the shrine, we are left entirely in the dark as to the height and shape of the structure; and the purpose and construction of several of the buildings within the enclosing walls is quite obscure. With a directness and concentration of purpose as impressive as it is tantalizing, Ezekiel passes by what does not assist his direct object, or he merely notices a structure which he assumes to be as familiar to us as it was to him. The temple proper would appear to be exactly similar to that of Solomon; the arrangement of the courts is entirely different; hence the care with which Ezekiel describes the latter. In the eyes of Ezekiel, the great requisite is symmetry, the symbol of complete holiness. Whether this feature was preserved in Zerubbabel's temple we cannot tell; it was not seriously aimed at by Herod. It must in any case have made the whole mass distinctly impressive (see the attempted restoration in Perrot and Chipiez' *Histoire de l'Art*, iv); crowning the summit of the hill on which Jerusalem was built, it rose, court above court, on well-marked terraces; the massive gate-houses would affect the selfsame day, the hand of the LORD was upon me, and he

visitor much as do the portals of our cathedrals; within, the eye would be rested by the broad open spaces of the courts as by the spaces inside an Italian church; and then it would be attracted inevitably to what held the whole system of squares together, the majestic temple-house.

There can be no doubt that Ezekiel expected such a temple to be built, nor, after the consummation of chaps. xxxii–xxxix, would he fear that the resources of the restored nation would be insufficient for such a work. When, more than a hundred years later, the returned exiles took the work of rebuilding seriously in hand, they were glad enough to do the best they could under their dispiriting circumstances, and were quite content to leave Ezekiel's plans in neglect.[1] But for the modern student this temple has a far greater interest than that of Zerubbabel; its details shed a light nowhere else vouchsafed to us upon the ideals of Hebrew art, influenced, perhaps, by Babylonian masterpieces, yet entirely national and puritan; and they embody in material form Ezekiel's sober but intense conception of religion, as completely as the Gothic cathedrals translate into concrete and abiding stone and marble the soaring visions of mediaeval Christianity.

The above considerations will suffice to show how uncalled-for is the view of Volz that these chapters are the work of a pupil. They do not form an appendix; the ideas of the preceding chapters would be left in the air without this completion and coping-stone. Nor would a pupil have ventured on so bold a reconstruction. The text is unfortunately in a very unsatisfactory state. Sometimes we can follow the LXX, which is, on the whole, much clearer than the Hebrew; sometimes we must resort to conjecture. The rule that of two alternative readings we must follow the more difficult sometimes leaves us with expressions which, in the absence of an original diagram, are unintelligible. The badness of the text, if not owing to the carelessness of scribes, may result, as Cornill holds, from attempts to revise it into harmony with the actual dimensions of Zerubbabel's temple.

xl. 1–4. *Introduction to the Account of the New Temple.*

1. The five and twentieth year: 572 B.C. The city was 'smitten' in 586 B.C. The 'beginning of the year' is, in later Hebrew, a technical term for New Year's Day; it does not occur elsewhere in the O. T. The old Israelite year began in autumn;

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[1] The remains of the temple of the Jewish settlers in Egypt recently discovered at Tel-el Yehudiyeh, thirty miles north of Cairo, are thought by Flinders Petrie to be an exact copy of Zerubbabel's temple. They exhibit no likeness to Ezekiel's design.

2 brought me thither. In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me down upon a very high mountain, whereon was as it were the frame of a city
3 on the south. And he brought me thither, and behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a
4 measuring reed; and he stood in the gate. And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel.

5 And behold, a wall on the outside of the house round

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in the exile it commenced to be reckoned in spring; in Lev. xxiii. 24 the new year begins on the first day of the seventh month: cf. Lev. xxv. 9; probably, therefore, the month here not mentioned is the seventh, i. e. September.

the hand of the LORD: see note on iii. 22; 'thither,' i. e. to the city.

2. visions of God: cf. i. 1, viii. 3; vision may well include the prophet's reflections on what he saw: cf. Isa. i. 1, where the word, though different from that used here, is also derived from a root meaning 'to see.'

a very high mountain: as is plain from chap. xlvi, the idealized hill on which Jerusalem stood: cf. xvii. 22; Isa. ii. 2; Ps. xlviii. 2.

the frame of a city: the temple structure, which, as here described, would look like a city. It is 'on the south,' since Ezekiel would regard himself as coming from the north.

3. a man: cf. the six men in ix. 2. 'Brass' (see note on xxxvii. 13), i. e. shining and radiant. The 'line' is for larger dimensions (xlvii. 3; a different word), the 'reed' for smaller.

the gate: from verse 2, this would be the north gate; the actual work of measurement is begun at the east (verse 6).

4. Cf. Exod. xxv. 40; in the same manner, the Babylonian monarch Gudea (see p. 75) claimed to see in a vision a figure, with sacred animals round him, bidding the king build a temple, whose plan was revealed to him by other heavenly figures.

xl. 4-15. *The Outer Gate on the East.*

5. the house is the whole building; elsewhere it is used of the

about, and in the man's hand a measuring reed of six
cubits long, of a cubit and an handbreadth each: so he
measured the thickness of the building, one reed; and
the height, one reed. Then came he unto the gate 6
which looketh toward the east, and went up the steps
thereof; and he measured the threshold of the gate, one
reed broad: and the other threshold, one reed broad.
And every lodge was one reed long, and one reed broad; 7

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temple proper, which, as worship grew more elaborate, was naturally marked off from the whole sacred place. Cf. Gen. xxviii. 22. Owing to the steep slope of the sides of the temple hill, this wide square would have necessitated an enormous substructure to secure a sufficiently large level space.

a cubit: i. e. each of the six cubits in the measuring rod was of the larger kind, equal to a cubit and a hand-breadth in the smaller measure; from 2 Chron. iii. 3 and 1 Kings vi. 2 it follows that Ezekiel's longer cubit was also the measure used for Solomon's temple, the common cubit of Ezekiel's time having shrunk by $\frac{1}{7}$. In Egypt, two cubits were in use, related to one another as 6 : 7; and also in Babylon, where the 'royal cubit' was $21\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, and the ordinary cubit $19\frac{5}{8}$, as can be seen from the rule of Gudea and the Senkereh tablet (cf. Haupt's discussion in Toy's *Ezekiel*, p. 179). There is no evidence for the exact length of the Hebrew cubit at this time; probably it would be influenced by Babylonian usage, and we may therefore roughly regard Ezekiel's (long) cubit as 21 inches, or rather more than half a yard; hence the 'reed' will be equal to $10\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

the building: i. e. the enclosing wall; its thickness is noteworthy.

6. the gate is really a large gate-house (see Plan B.) The eastern is the main entrance: cf. xliii. 1. The 'steps' were seven in number (cf. verse 22; LXX inserts that number here); the height of the entrance (i. e. the first terrace) above the surrounding level would be about seven feet (cf. xl. 49, xli. 8). The breadth of the threshold of the gate-house is of course the thickness of the wall (one reed).

and the other threshold: the literal translation is given in R. V. marg., 'even one threshold'; almost certainly a gloss.

7. every lodge: these square cells, whose existence Ezekiel takes for granted, were three on each side of the main passage through the gate-house, built into the wall; between each 'lodge' or 'cell' are five cubits of wall space.

and *the space* between the lodges was five cubits; and the
threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate toward the
8 house was one reed. He measured also the porch of the
9 gate toward the house, one reed. Then measured he the
porch of the gate, eight cubits; and the posts thereof, two

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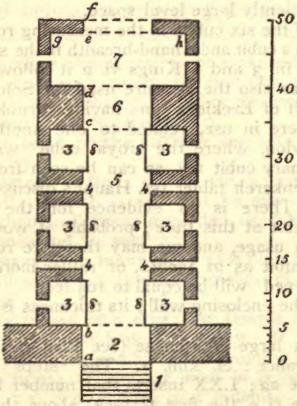
the porch, or large open space or vestibule, within the gate-house, is an essential feature in Ezekiel's architecture; it reappears in the inner gates and in the temple proper. This vestibule is at the end of the gate-house, 'towards the house,' and the threshold by which it is reached is symmetrical with the outer threshold.

8. This verse, as R. V. marg. suggests, should be omitted as a copyist's repetition.



1. Seven steps, xl. 6.
2. Outer threshold, xl. 6.
3. Lodges, xl. 7.
4. Posts (perforated), xl. 9.
5. Inner passage-way.
6. Inner threshold, xl. 7.
7. Porch, xl. 7.
8. Border, xl. 12.

a—b } Posts of
c—d } thresholds.

e—f Posts of porch, xl. 9.

Plan B. An Outer Gate-house.

9. The vestibule is eight cubits across (from threshold to opening).

the posts, or 'jambs' (R. V. marg.), are the faces of a wall where it is pierced for a gate-opening. As one passes into the court from the vestibule, the wall at either side is thus two cubits thick.

cubits; and the porch of the gate was toward the house.
And the lodges of the gate eastward were three on this side, 10
and three on that side; they three were of one measure:
and the posts had one measure on this side and on that
side. And he measured the breadth of the opening 11
of the gate, ten cubits; and the length of the gate, thirteen
cubits; and a border before the lodges, one cubit *on this* 12
side, and a border, one cubit on that side; and the lodges,
six cubits on this side, and six cubits on that side. And 13
he measured the gate from the roof of the one lodge
to the roof of the other, a breadth of five and twenty
cubits; door against door. He made also posts, three- 14
score cubits; and the court *reached* unto the post, the

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10. See on verse 7; the 'posts' here will be the 'spaces' between each cell.

11. the gate is that by which one left the vestibule for the inner court; this was ten cubits across.

thirteen cubits: nothing can be made of this figure. Perhaps a copyist saw that the breadth of the whole gate-house is twenty-five cubits; hence, to subtract from this the breadth of a pair of cells would leave thirteen cubits; but the result cannot be called either the length or (LXX) breadth of the gate.

12. a border: the word properly denotes a boundary or a space bounded off (xxvii. 4), and is generally understood here as a barrier in front of the cells (see Plan B, 8) and encroaching on the central passage-way, to enable sentries standing in the cells to see the whole length of the passage without being jostled. The 'cubit,' like the 'six cubits,' is a measure of width, not height. The arrangement of the similar inner gates would seem to necessitate drains; and analogy would suggest that here also the 'borders' may be open spaces or drains. The word is also used in connexion with the altar in xliii. 13, &c.; the Oxford Lexicon translates 'barrier' in this passage, and 'border' in chap. xliii.

13. Twenty-five cubits is the total breadth of the gate-house; 'from roof to roof' must mean 'including the outer wall.' The cells would seem to be roofed over, the passage being perhaps open.

door against door, i.e. from the cells were exits (opposite to one another) through the back wall.

14. A very difficult verse. The dimension 'sixty cubits' is impossible; 'he made' is a strange variant on the usual words 'he

15 gate *being* round about. And *from* the forefront of the gate at the entrance unto the forefront of the inner porch
16 of the gate were fifty cubits. And there were closed windows to the lodges, and to their posts within the gate round about, and likewise to the arches: and windows were round about inward: and upon *each* post were palm trees.

17 Then brought he me into the outer court, and, lo, there were chambers and a pavement, made for the court round about: thirty chambers were upon the pavement.

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measured'; altered most easily (with the help of LXX) to 'and he measured the porch, twenty cubits, and round the porch of the gate was the outer court.' See Plan B; the twenty cubits are measured from *g* to *h*. Perrot and Chipiez, keeping to 'posts,' imagine these to have been like high *campanili*; but Ezekiel always neglects height in his measurements.

15. The entire length of the gate-house.

16. closed windows, i. e. with lattice-work fitted into the walls; otherwise the entrance would have been quite dark. Windows were also let into the wall-fronts ('posts' or jambs) between the cells, in spite of the thickness of the walls.

arches: the word occurs only in this chapter, and it is doubtful whether it should not in each case be read 'porch' (the consonants of the two words are identical, and the LXX does not distinguish between them). In the apparently different words we may simply have two pronunciations of the same word; with *êlam* ('arch') Delitzsch compares the Assyrian *êlamu*, used for anything ancient. The palm is a common element in Assyrian ornament. The palms are also found on the inner gates, and are the only ornaments contemplated.

xl. 17-27. *The Outer Court.* After passing through the gate-house the visitor finds himself in a wide court, flanked by buildings and faced by another and similar gate-house (100 cubits, or about sixty yards distant), through which another court, on a higher level than the outer one, is reached. Beyond this gate he will see the lofty structure of the temple proper.

17. chambers: probably ten on each of the three walls (north, east, and south). These chambers are for the use of the people, for festal meals, &c.; they existed in the old temple, and were sometimes private (cf. viii. 8; also 2 Kings xxiii. 11; Jer. xxxv. 2, 4). In connexion with them were galleries and colonnades.

And the pavement was by the side of the gates, answerable 18
unto the length of the gates, even the lower pavement.
Then he measured the breadth from the forefront of the 19
lower gate unto the forefront of the inner court without,
an hundred cubits, *both* on the east and on the north.
And the gate of the outer court whose prospect is toward 20
the north, he measured the length thereof and the breadth
thereof. And the lodges thereof were three on this side 21
and three on that side; and the posts thereof and the
arches thereof were after the measure of the first gate:
the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth five
and twenty cubits. And the windows thereof, and the 22
arches thereof, and the palm trees thereof, were after the
measure of the gate whose prospect is toward the east;
and they went up unto it by seven steps; and the arches
thereof were before them. And there was a gate to the 23
inner court over against the *other* gate, *both* on the north
and on the east; and he measured from gate to gate an
hundred cubits. And he led me toward the south, and 24
behold a gate toward the south: and he measured the
posts thereof and the arches thereof according to these
measures. And there were windows in it and in the arches 25

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18. For the pavement running round the outer wall of the court, see Plan A, 3. It extended into the court as far as did the gate-house. 'Lower,' in opposition to the inner or higher court (verse 31).

19. For the last clause, which is perhaps a gloss, the LXX has 'facing eastwards, and he led me to the north.' The breadth of the court is measured opposite both the east and the north gates; it is repeated in verse 23.

20. The prophet crosses the outer court from the east gate to the north gate. The dimensions of the three outer gates are identical.

21. arches: probably, 'porch'; so in verses 22, 24, 25, 26. See note on verse 16.

22. seven steps: cf. verse 26, and see note on verse 6.

thereof round about, like those windows: the length was
26 fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits. And
there were seven steps to go up to it, and the arches
thereof were before them: and it had palm trees, one
on this side, and another on that side, upon the posts
27 thereof. And there was a gate to the inner court toward
the south: and he measured from gate to gate toward the
south an hundred cubits.

28 Then he brought me to the inner court by the south
gate: and he measured the south gate according to these
29 measures; and the lodges thereof, and the posts thereof,
and the arches thereof, according to these measures: and
there were windows in it and in the arches thereof round
about: it was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits
30 broad. And there were arches round about, five and
31 twenty cubits long, and five cubits broad. And the
arches thereof were toward the outer court; and palm
trees were upon the posts thereof: and the going up to it
32 had eight steps. And he brought me into the inner
court toward the east: and he measured the gate ac-
33 cording to these measures; and the lodges thereof, and
the posts thereof, and the arches thereof, according to

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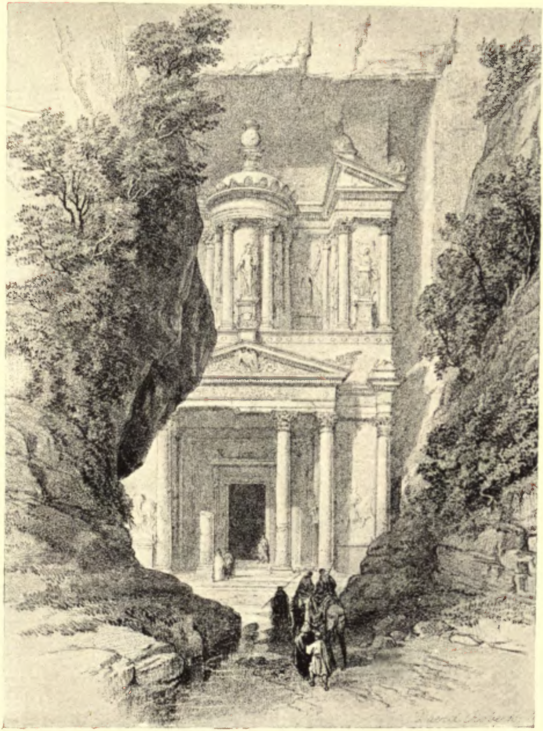
xl. 28-37. *The Inner Court.* Mounting the eight steps (verse 34) and passing through the inner gate-house, the visitor finds himself in a smaller but equally symmetrical court, exactly 100 cubits square, in the centre of which is the great altar, eighteen cubits square and twelve high (cf. xliii. 13-17). On the west side is the higher terrace on which is built the temple proper.

28. Ezekiel enters through the south gate, as he has been at the south side of the outer court (verse 24). These gates are precisely like those of the outer court, save that the visitor reaches the vestibule first instead of last (verses 31, 34, reading 'porch' for 'arches,' and see note on verse 16).

30. This verse is omitted by the LXX and most editors; nor is there any room for these dimensions of the 'arches' or 'porch.'

31. For 'arches' read 'porch'; so in verses 34, 36.


David Roberts

Drawing by David Roberts, R.A.

THE TREASURY OF PHARAOH (PETRA)

these measures: and there were windows therein and in the arches thereof round about: it was fifty cubits long, and five and twenty cubits broad. And the arches 34 thereof were toward the outer court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps. And he brought me to 35 the north gate: and he measured *it* according to these measures; the lodges thereof, the posts thereof, and the 36 arches thereof; and there were windows therein round about: the length was fifty cubits, and the breadth five and twenty cubits. And the posts thereof were toward 37 the outer court; and palm trees were upon the posts thereof, on this side, and on that side: and the going up to it had eight steps.

And a chamber with the door thereof was by the posts 38 at the gates; there they washed the burnt offering. And in the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, 39 and two tables on that side, to slay thereon the burnt

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34. The outer gates had seven steps. The rise in Solomon's temple is not mentioned. From xli. 8, each step was $\frac{3}{5}$ c.; hence the height of the inner above the outer court is about eight and a half feet.

xl. 38-47. *The Sacrificial Tables and the Chambers of the Inner Court.*

38. The verse is too brief to be clear; does this arrangement apply to each of the gates? Is the chamber outside the gate-house (thus breaking the symmetry), or, as Kraetzschmar prefers, hollowed out of the wall between porch and cell?

39. the gate: Smend holds that this is the principal, or east gate, which was to be kept closed, and on whose south side flowed the temple-stream. But Davidson points out that the prophet is at the north side (verse 35), and that in Lev. i. 11, iv. 24, &c., the slaughter of animals for burnt-offering, sin-offering, and thank-offering takes place at the north side of the altar; Ezekiel (viii. 5) calls the north gate 'the gate of the altar.' It seems more probable, however, that as the chambers for the priests (verse 44) were on the south and north, so these tables were at the east, thus preserving the symmetry. See Plan A, 14.

40 offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering. And
on the *one* side without, as one goeth up to the entry of
the gate toward the north, were two tables; and on the
other side, which belonged to the porch of the gate, were
41 two tables. Four tables were on this side, and four
tables on that side, by the side of the gate; eight tables,
42 whereupon they slew *the sacrifices.* And there were four
tables for the burnt offering, of hewn stone, a cubit and
an half long, and a cubit and an half broad, and one
cubit high: whereupon they laid the instruments where-
43 with they slew the burnt offering and the sacrifice. And
the hooks, an handbreadth long, were fastened within
round about: and upon the tables was the flesh of the
44 oblation. And without the inner gate were chambers for
the singers in the inner court, which was at the side of the

Sin-offerings and guilt-offerings are here mentioned for the first time in the O. T. These offerings are prepared under cover.

40. toward the north: if the text is right (the LXX differs considerably), these words imply that the reference is to the east gate; 'on the other side' will refer to the south side of the gate; the clause 'which belonged to the porch of the gate' is not necessarily confined, as the comma seems to imply, to 'the other side.'

41, 42. The references to the tables are obscure; but it would seem that there were altogether eight tables for killing the sacrificial animals, two on either hand inside the porch, and two more on either hand outside. To each pair of tables went another and smaller table, of hewn stone, on which the instruments were laid. These tables are described with special care, though their peculiar importance is not clear.

43. hooks should probably be read (as R.V. marg.) 'ledges,' to prevent the holy altar flesh from falling to the ground. The last clause perhaps implies that hitherto the 'oblation' (a rare word in Ezekiel in this sense) had been killed on the ground.

44. chambers for the singers should be read as 'two chambers' (cf. verse 45); so LXX. 'Without the inner gate,' i. e. in the inner court outside the gate-house (cf. Plan A, 11). The 'east gate' should almost certainly be the 'south,' opposite to the northern chamber just mentioned.

north gate; and their prospect was toward the south: one at the side of the east gate having the prospect toward the north. And he said unto me, This chamber, whose 45 prospect is toward the south, is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house. And the chamber whose 46 prospect is toward the north is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok, which from among the sons of Levi come near to the LORD to minister unto him. And he measured the court, 47 an hundred cubits long, and an hundred cubits broad, foursquare; and the altar was before the house.

Then he brought me to the porch of the house, and 48 measured each post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side: and the breadth of the gate was three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that

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45. This chamber: the first of the two mentioned in verse 44; cf. xliv. 14; by the priests, as distinct from the 'sons of Zadok,' (cf. xliv. 15), are probably meant the Levites of xliv. 10.

46. the altar: not hitherto mentioned (cf. verse 47), but described at length in xliii. 13-17; it stood in the middle of the inner court. Cf. viii. 12.

the sons of Zadok: see xliv. 10, 11. Ezekiel is the first to emphasize the distinction between priests and Levites.

xl. 48, 49. *The Temple Vestibule.* From the chambers by the north and south gates Ezekiel passes across the court to the terrace on which stands the temple proper; it is like the gate-houses, but on a scale twice as large. The temple has a spacious vestibule, and two rows of cells; but the cells are separated from the central passage-way, which is enlarged into a nave and an interior shrine.

48. The thickness of each 'post' (Plan C, *h-l*, *i-m*) is that of the walls, five cubits, or over 8 feet. As the text stands, the 'breadth of the gate' must refer to the main entrance. Perhaps it might be explained as having two doors of three cubits each; but such an arrangement is unlikely (cf. verse 49); and the LXX reads 'the width of the entrance (Plan C, *h-i*) was fourteen cubits, and the side-pieces of the entrance of the vestibule were three cubits on either side' (*g-h* and *i-j*); and this agrees with

49 side. The length of the porch was twenty cubits, and the breadth eleven cubits; even by the steps whereby they went up to it: and there were pillars by the posts, one on this side, and another on that side.

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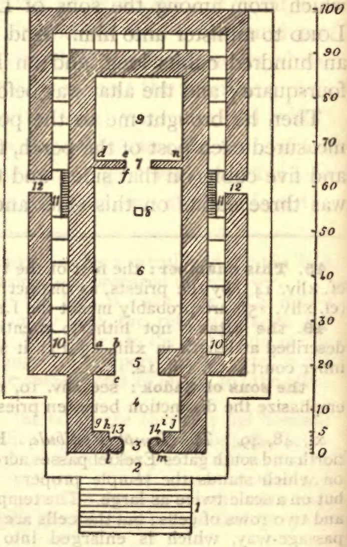
verse 49, according to which the whole breadth of the vestibule is twenty cubits (*g–j*; verse 49).

49. The breadth should be twelve cubits (so LXX), or the

1. Ten steps.
2. Surrounding pavement, xli. 8.
3. Outer entrance.
4. Porch, xl. 49.
5. Inner entrance, xli. 2.
6. Holy place, xli. 2.
7. Entrance to most holy place, xli. 3.
8. Altar, xli. 22.
9. Most holy place, xli. 4.
10. Priests' cells (in three stories), xli. 5.
11. Stairway to upper stories, xli. 7.
12. Exit to separate place, xli. 11.

13, 14. Pillars, xl. 49.

e–f, *b–c*, *h–l* } Posts, xl. 48, xli. 1, xli. 3.



PLAN C. THE TEMPLE-HOUSE.

total length, 100 cubits (xli. 13), cannot be made up. The LXX also gives the number of steps as ten, the temple terraces increasing in height as one proceeds inwards. The two pillars correspond to 'Jachin and Boaz' in Solomon's temple (1 Kings vii. 21, 45). Associated as were the pillars with heathen worship, these two are allowed by Ezekiel, being probably too familiar to

And he brought me to the temple, and measured the 41
posts, six cubits broad on the one side, and six cubits
broad on the other side, which was the breadth of the

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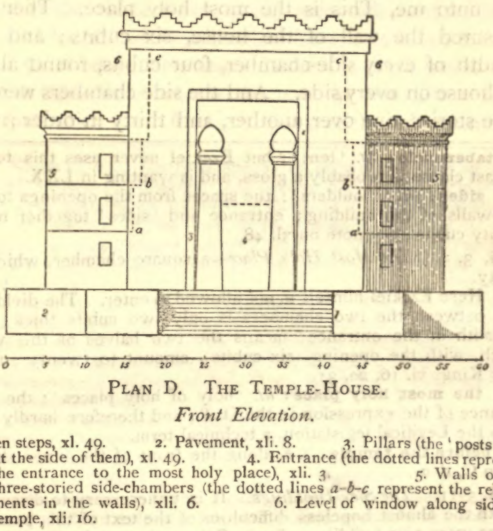
be easily omitted from the new building. The diameter of each pillar in Solomon's temple was about four cubits: if this dimension is preserved, the actual opening between them would only be six cubits. T. W. Davies supposes the pillars to have stood in front of the porch (*Dict. Bib.*, art. TEMPLE); but in that case they could hardly be said to be 'by' the posts (Plan C, *h–l*, *i–m*).

xli. 1, 2. *The Holy Place.* Ezekiel here follows very closely



PLAN D. THE TEMPLE-HOUSE.

Front Elevation.

1. Ten steps, xl. 49. 2. Pavement, xli. 8. 3. Pillars (the 'posts' are at the side of them), xl. 49. 4. Entrance (the dotted lines represent the entrance to the most holy place), xli. 3. 5. Walls of the three-storied side-chambers (the dotted lines *a–b–c* represent the rebatements in the walls), xli. 6. 6. Level of window along side of temple, xli. 16.

the dimensions of Solomon's temple (1 Kings vi, vii). The height of Solomon's temple was thirty cubits, or about fifty feet (see Plan D).

1. the posts: i. e. the thickness of the wall as one passes from vestibule to holy place (see Plan C, *b–c*), the wall being thicker here than in the entrance to the vestibule (xl. 48).

2 tabernacle. And the breadth of the entrance was ten cubits; and the sides of the entrance were five cubits on the one side, and five cubits on the other side: and he measured the length thereof, forty cubits, and the breadth,
3 twenty cubits. Then went he inward, and measured each post of the entrance, two cubits: and the entrance, six cubits; and the breadth of the entrance, seven cubits.
4 And he measured the length thereof, twenty cubits, and the breadth, twenty cubits, before the temple: and he
5 said unto me, This is the most holy place. Then he measured the wall of the house, six cubits; and the breadth of every side-chamber, four cubits, round about
6 the house on every side. And the side-chambers were in three stories, one over another, and thirty in order; and

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tabernacle: *lit.* 'tent'; but Ezekiel never uses this term; the last clause is probably a gloss, and is wanting in LXX.

2. **sides:** *lit.* 'shoulders'; the spaces from the openings to the side-walls of the building; entrance and 'sides' together make twenty cubits; see note on xl. 48.

xli. 3, 4. *The Most Holy Place*—a square chamber, which is empty.

3. Here Ezekiel himself is not allowed to enter. The dividing-wall between the two chambers is only two cubits thick; the 'breadth of the entrance' means the two halves of this wall, which, with the opening (six cubits), amount to twenty cubits. Cf. 1 Kings vi. 16, 20, 31.

4. **the most holy place:** *lit.* 'holy of holy places'; the first instance of the expression in the O. T., and therefore hardly yet, as in the Levitical legislation, a technical term.

before the temple: i. e. along the front of the inner shrine (Plan C, *d–n*).

xli. 5–11. *The Side-Buildings.* It is unnecessary to discuss at length the almost hopeless difficulties of the text of this passage. There were side-buildings also in Solomon's temple; and doubtless to the priestly Ezekiel their construction would be of great interest; but the details, whatever they actually were, do not effect our general conception of the structure.

5. **six cubits:** cf. verse 1.

6. The text means that there were three stories, and either thirty or thirty-three cells in each, presumably for temple furniture

they entered into the wall which belonged to the house for the side-chambers round about, that they might have hold *therein*, and not have hold in the wall of the house. And the side-chambers were broader as they 7 encompassed *the house* higher and higher; for the encompassing of the house went higher and higher round about the house: therefore the breadth of the house *continued* upward; and so one went up *from* the lowest *chamber* to the highest by the middle *chamber*. I saw 8 also that the house had a raised basement round about: the foundations of the side-chambers were a full reed of six great cubits. The thickness of the wall, which was 9 for the side-chambers, on the outside, was five cubits: and that which was left was the place of the side chambers

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(cf. 1 Kings vi. 6). Josephus speaks of only thirty cells in each story of Solomon's building. The second half of the verse refers to the arrangement described in 1 Kings vi. 6, 'on the outside he made rebatements in the wall of the house'; thus the temple-walls would grow thinner towards the roof; the walls themselves were too sacred to be pierced by the beams of the stories. See Plan D, 5.

7. Proportionate to the rebatements the width of the chambers increased in each story right round the temple. According to 1 Kings vi the storys increased in width by a cubit each. 'One went up' (1 Kings vi. 8), by a ladder and trap-door (spiral staircases were unknown in the East), from the ground-floor to first and second floors.

8. I saw should be, as suggested by the LXX, 'and there appeared.' The raised basement, or, as we should probably read, pavement, makes a walk round all three sides of the temple, and acts as a further protection for its 'holiness' (Plan C, 2). The word translated 'great' cannot signify a species of cubit (xl. 5 is not here referred to), and should probably be read 'at its side.' The six cubits correspond to the ten steps (xl. 49), marking the height of the terrace.

9–11. The wall was thicker than the side-chambers, as sometimes happened in Assyrian buildings. 'That which was left' appears to be twenty cubits broad in verse 10, and five cubits broad in verse 11. What was its relation to the 'pavement' of verse 8, and the 'separate place' of verse 12? Probably the five

10 that belonged to the house. And between the chambers
was a breadth of twenty cubits round about the house on
11 every side. And the doors of the side-chambers were
toward *the place* that was left, one door toward the north,
and another door toward the south: and the breadth of
12 the place that was left was five cubits round about. And
the building that was before the separate place at the
side toward the west was seventy cubits broad; and the
wall of the building was five cubits thick round about,
13 and the length thereof ninety cubits. So he measured
the house, an hundred cubits long; and the separate place,
and the building, with the walls thereof, an hundred
14 cubits long; also the breadth of the face of the house,

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cubits (verse 11) measure the breadth of the raised pavement and the space between the temple-wall and the edge of the terrace, while the twenty cubits (verse 10) denote the passage between the raised pavement and the priests' chambers (Plan A, 6).

10. 'Between' can hardly be right as it stands; see note on previous verse.

11. The side-chambers were thus entered from the outside, not the inside.

xli. 12–14. *The Hinder Building and Total Measurements.*

12. the building (see xl. 5): here used of a structure whose purpose is not mentioned, lying west of the temple, oblong in shape (Plan A, 10). To one looking westwards it lies 'before' or in front of a passage, or 'separate place,' twenty cubits broad, which ran round the temple-terrace on the three sides, north, west, and south. This 'building' may be identical with the place called 'Parbar' ('open summer-house') in 1 Chron. xxvi. 18: cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 11.

13. The totals are thus made up; the 'house,' from east to west:—wall of vestibule five, vestibule twelve, wall of entrance to nave six, nave forty, dividing-wall two, shrine twenty, temple-wall six, breadth of side chambers four, outer wall five; 100 cubits in all. From west temple-wall to west outside wall (100 cubits):—'separate place' twenty, depth of 'building' seventy, walls of 'building' 5 + 5.

14. The total breadth is thus made up:—'separate place' 20 + 20, pavement 5 + 5, outer wall 5 + 5, breadth of side buildings 4 + 4, temple wall 6 + 6, breadth of temple twenty; 100 cubits in all.

and of the separate place toward the east, an hundred cubits.

And he measured the length of the building before the 15 separate place which was at the back thereof, and the galleries thereof on the one side and on the other side, an hundred cubits; and the inner temple, and the porches of the court; the thresholds, and the closed windows, and 16 the galleries round about on their three stories, over against the threshold, cieled with wood round about, and *from* the ground up to the windows; now the windows were covered; to *the space* above the door, even unto the 17 inner house, and without, and by all the wall round about within and without, by measure. And it was made with 18

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xli. 15-26. *Description of the Interior of the Temple.* As in Solomon's temple, no stone was to be seen; floors and walls would seem to have been wainscotted; as the windows could let in but little light, lamps would probably give a dim illumination, by which the continuous carvings of cherubs and palm-trees could be distinguished. The length of nave and shrine together (interior) was rather more than 100 ft., i.e. some 25 ft. shorter than the length of the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral. Neither gold nor cedar (1 Kings vi. 20) is mentioned.

15. The account of the interior is prefixed by a final measurement, which should really go with the preceding verse.

he measured: here, as in verse 13, the tense used implies a continued process, made up of the subordinate acts of measuring. From north to south the interior of the 'building' measures ninety cubits. The 'galleries' (a term only used here, verse 16, and xlii. 3, 5) are quite obscure; possibly 'balconies' are meant. Cornill reads 'walls,' which are here included in the measurement. The fresh paragraph thus properly begins at 'and the inner temple'; the LXX suggests the reading, 'the temple and the interior.'

16. For the nouns in verses 15, 16 some predicate is needed. LXX suggests 'were wainscotted' or 'veneered'; the second half of verse 16 probably contained the words 'up to the roof went wooden balconies all round.'

17. by measure: or, as R.V. marg., 'measures.' This verse would appear to mean that 'from the ground to the windows, from the side-walls by the entrance to the inner shrine, as also

cherubim and palm trees; and a palm tree was between
19 cherub and cherub, and every cherub had two faces; so
that there was the face of a man toward the palm tree on
the one side, and the face of a young lion toward the
palm tree on the other side: *thus was it* made through
20 all the house round about. From the ground unto above
the door were cherubim and palm trees made: thus was
21 the wall of the temple. As for the temple, the door posts
were squared; and as for the face of the sanctuary, the
appearance *thereof* was as the appearance *of the temple.*
22 The altar was of wood, three cubits high, and the length
thereof two cubits; and the corners thereof, and the
length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood: and
he said unto me, This is the table that is before the LORD.
23, 24 And the temple and the sanctuary had two doors. And
the doors had two leaves *apiece*, two turning leaves; two

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outside, were, on the whole wall, measured spaces' in the wainscot, for the ornamentation.

18. The cherubs are kept for the interior of the temple (cf. verse 26); they differ from those of chap. i in having only two faces: cf. 1 Kings vi. 29; also Ezek. xxiii. 14.

20, 21. The reading of the R.V. marg. is to be preferred ('and as for the wall of the temple, the door-posts were squared'), the last word of verse 20 ('the temple') having been inserted in error.

21. In Solomon's temple, the doors of the shrine were pentagonal (so Benzinger &c. interpret 1 Kings vi. 31). In the uncertain text of this verse some reference to the doors of the shrine is to be expected. The last words of the verse should probably be omitted, and we should read 'in front of the shrine was the appearance (verse 22) as the appearance of an altar of wood.'

22. This altar or table is the only piece of furniture in the temple (the ark is never heard of after the destruction of Solomon's temple). It is probably to be identified with the table of shewbread (overlaid with gold in Solomon's temple), which is mentioned in connexion with the shrine at every stage of its history, while the altar of incense only appears in the latest legislation. 'Length,' as in R.V. marg., should be 'base.'

24. In Solomon's temple only the nave (not the shrine) has

leaves for the one door, and two leaves for the other. And 25
there were made on them, on the doors of the temple,
cherubim and palm trees, like as were made upon the
walls; and there were thick beams of wood upon the face
of the porch without. And there were closed windows 26
and palm trees on the one side and on the other side,
on the sides of the porch: thus were the side-chambers
of the house, and the thick beams.

Then he brought me forth into the outer court, the way **42**
toward the north: and he brought me into the chamber
that was over against the separate place, and which was
over against the building toward the north. Before the 2
length of an hundred cubits was the north door, and the

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double doors, i. e. the outer half of each door turned on an axis, so that it was not necessary to open the whole door.

25. These 'beams' (1 Kings vii. 6) may denote a covering or roofing-over outside, as in the Phoenician temple at El-amrit; or possibly the 'landing' at the top of the steps is meant.

26. The last clause of this verse forms part of an incomplete sentence. The word rendered 'thick beams' is similar to that discussed in the last note, but is found nowhere else.

xlii. 1–12. *The Priests' Cells in the Inner Court.* Opposite the sides of the temple proper, on the north and south sides of the inner court, are two pairs of blocks of buildings used as refectories and dressing-rooms for priests (cf. xlvi. 19). The special purpose which they had to serve doubtless explains Ezekiel's care in describing them; unfortunately, the state of the text still renders the determination of several details very difficult.

1. he brought me forth. LXX adds 'from the inner court'; he faces and enters the 'chamber,' or cells, on the north side of the temple (Plan A, 8) across the passage-way called the 'separate place.' The 'building' is here the outer surrounding wall (xl. 5) and not the 'hinder building' of xli. 12. LXX mentions the number of cells, either five or, in other MSS., fifteen.

2. If the text is right, we must suppose with Davidson that he is at the door which entered the longer block of chambers from the passage between them (Plan A, 7). This block was one hundred cubits long, and the 'breadth' of the two blocks together, with the passage, was fifty cubits. The LXX, more simply, reads,

3 breadth was fifty cubits. Over against the twenty *cubits* which belonged to the inner court, and over against the pavement which belonged to the outer court, was gallery
4 against gallery in the third story. And before the chambers was a walk of ten cubits breadth inward, a way of one cubit; and their doors were toward the north.
5 Now the upper chambers were shorter: for the galleries took away from these, more than from the lower and the
6 middlemost, in the building. For they were in three stories, and they had not pillars as the pillars of the courts: therefore *the uppermost* was straitened more than
7 the lowest and the middlemost from the ground. And the wall that was without by the side of the chambers,

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'the length on the north side was one hundred cubits,' which certainly suits the last words better.

3. the twenty cubits: what this number refers to is not specified; it has probably crept into the text in error, and is absent from LXX. Davidson suggests that the term refers to the 'separate place.' It would have been more natural that the inner and outer courts alone should have been mentioned; but since the 'pavement' of the latter is mentioned, some special part of the former may originally have stood in the text. Ezekiel assumes the reader to know that, as he says in verse 6, the blocks are of three stories, but he mentions the 'galleries' or 'balconies' facing one another across the passage between.

4. This passage was ten cubits broad and (so LXX) 100 cubits long (cf. verse 2). 'Their doors' means the doors of the southern block. The northern block would presumably be entered from its south side.

5. the upper chambers: the cells on the third story of the blocks; their outer wall stands back from the others, to allow of the 'gallery' which runs in front of them looking down on the passage. These chambers decrease in breadth, as the chambers in the temple-house increase, towards the top.

6. See verse 3. The obscure phrase 'pillars of the court' is explained by the reading of the LXX, 'pillars of the outer court'; i. e. the chambers on the outside wall were like these chambers in being arranged in three stories; but they, unlike these, had pillars or arcading instead of 'galleries.'

7, 8. By the chambers that were in the outer court must be

toward the outer court before the chambers, the length
thereof was fifty cubits. For the length of the chambers 8
that were in the outer court was fifty cubits: and, lo,
before the temple were an hundred cubits. And from 9
under these chambers was the entry on the east side, as
one goeth into them from the outer court. In the 10
thickness of the wall of the court toward the east, before
the separate place, and before the building, there were
chambers. And the way before them was like the 11
appearance of *the way of* the chambers which were
toward the north; according to their length so was their
breadth: and all their goings out were both according to
their fashions, and according to their doors. And ac- 12
cording to the doors of the chambers that were toward
the south was a door in the head of the way, even the
way directly before the wall toward the east, as one

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meant the outer block; this was half the length of the inner block, hence a wall or (R. V. margin) 'fence' (the word is different from that previously used for 'wall') of fifty cubits is needed to run 'toward the outer court before the chambers,' separating the inner from the outer court. In the second half of verse 8 'lo' occurs strangely; LXX reads 'these (the shorter block) faced those (the longer)—in all, 100 cubits [in length].'

9. from under these chambers: i. e. from the lower level of the outer court. The outer court lies of course to the north of these blocks (cf. xlvi. 19), and if the entry was 'on the east side' we must imagine a flight of steps running parallel to the wall of the inner court (see Plan A, 13).

10. In the thickness of the wall should be 'at the beginning of the wall,' and the words should be joined to verse 9.

10-12. The text as it stands must be considerably amended, and approximated to what is found in the LXX. 'On the south side, in front of the separate place and the building, were chambers (verse 11) with a passage-way in front of them, like the chambers on the north, as long and as broad as they, with the same goings out and arrangements; and according to their doors (verse 12) were the doors of the chambers that were toward the south; there was a door at the beginning of the passage-way, before the wall on the east as one entereth into them [from the

13 entereth into them. Then said he unto me, The north chambers and the south chambers, which are before the separate place, they be the holy chambers, where the priests that are near unto the LORD shall eat the most holy things: there shall they lay the most holy things, and the meal offering, and the sin offering, and the guilt
14 offering; for the place is holy. When the priests enter in, then shall they not go out of the holy place into the outer court, but there they shall lay their garments wherein they minister; for they are holy: and they shall put on other garments, and shall approach to that which pertaineth to the people.

15 Now when he had made an end of measuring the inner house, he brought me forth by the way of the gate

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outer court].' The comparison with the northern chambers in verse 11 makes it clear that 'east' (verse 10) must be altered to 'south.' By the 'building' (verse 10) will be meant the temple proper, beyond the 'separate place.' The word rendered 'directly' (verse 12) does not occur elsewhere. The entrance on the east (verse 12) corresponds to that mentioned in verse 9.

xlii. 13-14. *The uses to which the Priests' Cells are put.*

13. The 'chambers' are the longer blocks of cells, in which the priests are to eat the most holy things. These most holy things are only to be kept, and consumed, by holy persons in a holy place; the idea of the sacrifice as a festal meal to which the offerer invites the deity is now definitely set aside.

the meal offering, &c.: cf. xliv. 29; these three offerings explain the term 'most holy things.'

14. Smend suggests that the priests put off their ordinary clothes in the shorter blocks of cells: cf. xliv. 19. The LXX reads 'no one shall enter these except the priests.' The Hebrew text means that the priests are not to wear their sacred clothes outside the inner court, lest contact with the 'laity' should profane them. It is clear, therefore, that these blocks of cells are special safeguards for the distinction between the holy and the common.

xlii. 15-20. *The Final Measurements.*

15. The angel now brings Ezekiel to the spot where he had met him, outside the outer east gate.

whose prospect is toward the east, and measured it
round about. He measured on the east side with the 16
measuring reed, five hundred reeds, with the measuring
reed round about. He measured on the north side, five 17
hundred reeds, with the measuring reed round about.
He measured on the south side, five hundred reeds, with 18
the measuring reed. He turned about to the west 19
side, and measured five hundred reeds with the measuring reed. He measured it on the four sides: it had 20
a wall round about, the length five hundred, and the
breadth five hundred, to make a separation between that
which was holy and that which was common.

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16. reeds must be read, here and in the following verses, as 'cubits' (so LXX; cf. xlv. 2); the open space round the temple structure is to be only fifty cubits broad.

The totals are thus made up;—*a.* on the east side, i. e. from north to south; 4 × 50 (gate-house lengths, xl. 21, 25, 29, 36) + 2 × 100 (space between outer and inner gate-houses, xl. 23, 27) + 100 (space between the two inner gates, xl. 47); *b.* on the north side, i. e. from east to west; 2 × 50 (length of gate-houses) + 100 (between outer and inner gate-houses) + 100 (breadth of inner forecourt, xl. 47) + 100 (temple proper, xli. 13) + 100 (building behind temple, xli. 13).

20. a wall: this is the 'building' of xl. 5.

a separation: such a separation between sacred and profane seems against xlviii. 12, where the whole precincts are holy; but it is only natural that there should be gradations in holiness; the main interest is obviously in the temple itself.

For Ezekiel, as for Solomon, the real place of worship would be the court; the temple proper would be dark and silent. In Solomon's arrangement there was only one temple-court; the 'outer' court contained also the royal palace. The distinction between outer and inner courts belongs to Ezekiel, who guards against any such profanation with the utmost care. He says nothing of the brazen sea or the 'lavers.' Zerubbabel's temple had two courts, but the laity had access to both (this is also contemplated in the Priests' code); the Holy of Holies was separated from the Holy Place by a curtain (the 'veil of the temple') instead of doors. In Herod's temple the outer or Gentiles' court was very large—widest on the south side—and the

43 Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate

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inner court contained women's court, court of Israelites, Priests' court, and the temple proper. See its reconstruction in Sanday, *Sacred Sites of the Gospels.* Reconstructions and elevations of Solomon's temple are given in Stade's *History of Israel*, vol. i, and *Hastings's Dict. Bib.*, art. *Temple*, by T. Witton-Davies. Very elaborate reconstructions of Ezekiel's temple are given by Chipiez in Perrot and Chipiez's *Art in Sardinia, Syria, &c.*, vol. ii, the two most important of which are reproduced in Toy's *Ezekiel.* Chipiez conjectures the various details from surviving examples of Phoenician art. Many of these are uncertain, and the lofty pylons which he places at each gate-house and at the temple-house are unwarrantably borrowed from Egyptian architecture. See also Skinner's *Ezekiel* (*Expositor's Bible*), pp. 406 ff. Ezekiel's whole structure is (verse 20) about 300 yards square; the length of the inner court, to the rear of the temple proper, is 150 yards; the temple proper (exterior), 60 yards. The Parthenon measures nearly 70 yards, and St. Paul's just over 150 yards.

Nothing can be gathered from the text as to the style of the temple. The Jews had come in contact with three architectural styles—Egyptian, Phoenician, and Assyrian. The distinctive features of Egyptian architecture, and especially the conspicuous pylons and long colonnades of its temples, are nowhere suggested; indeed, the whole of the O. T. is surprisingly free from the influence of Egyptian thought or art; wide and open courts, however, are characteristic of Phoenician temples; simplicity and massiveness combined with much ornament are observable in all typical Assyrian structures. If Ezekiel's thought ever passed beyond the ground-plan of his temple, he would probably imagine a building with an appearance as suggestive of durable strength as an Assyrian palace, but built of stone instead of brick, and with no ornament save in the interior.

SECTION II. THE TEMPLE SERVICE (xliii–xlvi).

Now that the plan of the whole structure has been revealed, the prophet is ready to behold the entrance of Yahweh into the temple which he had left in chap. xi. Yahweh announces that the old impurities are now to be at an end, and that the prophet is to make known to the people the new plan (xliii. 1–12). Then follow the measurements of the great altar (xliii. 13–17) and the description of the sacrifices by which it is to be consecrated (xliii. 18–27). Next, as Ezekiel passes to the east and the north gates, he learns of the exclusion of foreigners and the degradation of the Levites (xliv. 1–14), and of the duties and restrictions of the priests (xliv. 15–31), and their revenues (xlv. 1–8), with the amounts of the various

that looketh toward the east: and behold, the glory of 2
the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his
voice was like the sound of many waters: and the earth
shined with his glory. And it was according to the 3
appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to

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temple offerings (xlv. 9–17). These are followed by the ritual of the two days of atonement (xlv. 18–25), and of the other Sabbaths and festivals, in which the offerings and functions of the prince are described with special care, as also the entailing of his estates (xlvi. 1–18); and the section closes with a notice, suggested by the previous directions as to the offerings, of the temple kitchens (xlvi. 19–24).

On this section, cf. Introd., pp. 27 ff. Except for the regulations as to the prince, Ezekiel here covers ground covered also by Deuteronomy and by the later or Priests' code. Detached contrasts are pointed out in the notes. In general, Ezekiel comes midway between the two, though at times he is more thoroughgoing than the latter. The Priests' code developed Ezekiel's ideas, but did not regard it as desirable or possible that they should all be carried out in practice. Both Deuteronomy and Ezekiel, under the influence of certain conceptions of holiness, give a revision of existing practice so developed that in some cases it amounts to an actual break with the past; yet the underlying ideas—sacrifice as the means of approach to God, the distinction between the holy and the common, and the importance of correct ritual—exist in all. It is true that Ezekiel seems to oppose Jeremiah and all the older prophets with regard to the worth of cultus. But for Ezekiel the law is the means of preserving religious freedom from contamination; without it, the prophetic ideas would hardly have survived. The real hope of the future for Ezekiel lies in perfect or willing obedience to the law; between the physical and moral aspects of holiness he refuses to distinguish.

xliii. 1–9. *The Entrance of Yahweh into the Temple.*

1. The prophet is now brought round again from the west to the east gate: cf. xl. 3.

2. The glory of Yahweh had left by the east gate (x. 19, xi. 22 f.). For the thunder and lightning which attend his appearance, cf. Rev. i. 15.

3. The expression is even more pleonastic in the present Hebrew text: 'And according to the appearance was the appearance which I saw according to the appearance which I saw.' At least one of the three occurrences of the word is wrong.

the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the
4 river Chebar: and I fell upon my face. And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate
5 whose prospect is toward the east. And the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and
6 behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. And I heard one speaking unto me out of the house; and
7 a man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, *this is* the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever: and the house of Israel shall no more defile my holy name, neither they, nor their kings, by their whoredom, and by the carcases of their kings *in*

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when I came should be 'when he came' (the change demanded being very slight). Ezekiel took no part in the destruction of the city described in chaps. viii, ix; nor is xxxii. 18 a real parallel.

visions should be in the singular.

by the river Chebar: cf. i. 4 ff., iii. 23, viii. 2, 22.

4. the glory corresponds to the Shekinah of the later Jewish literature.

5. the spirit: see on ii. 2. It is by the spirit that Ezekiel in his trance-experiences is brought from one place to another. Ezekiel now stands in the inner court, where was the altar, in front of the temple, while the 'glory' fills the temple itself.

6. While the angel stands by Ezekiel, the divine voice is heard out of the temple (in Revelation, it is the angel who speaks throughout).

7. An emphatic assertion that Yahweh will not again leave his temple. The Hebrew text implies some such expression as 'hast thou seen' instead of 'this is'; the sense is the same.

my holy name: Yahweh's name is the fullness of his attributes as revealed to men; 'holy' because divine (cf. Introd., p. 36), and therefore not to be treated as if belonging to ordinary men.

their kings. The attitude of Ezekiel to the royal house recalls that of the older prophets of the northern kingdom, especially Elijah and Elisha; Isaiah had lived in close relations with Hezekiah, and Zedekiah had done his feeble best for Jeremiah. For these 'profane' royal burials, cf. 1 Kings ii. 10, xi. 43;

their high places; in their setting of their threshold by 8
my threshold, and their door post beside my door post,
and there was *but* the wall between me and them; and
they have defiled my holy name by their abominations
which they have committed: wherefore I have consumed
them in mine anger. Now let them put away their 9
whoredom, and the carcases of their kings, far from me,
and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever.

Thou, son of man, shew the house to the house of 10
Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities:
and let them measure the pattern. And if they be 11
ashamed of all that they have done, make known unto

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2 Kings xxi. 18, 26; also Isa. xiv. 18. They were on the south-west of the temple-hill (Neh. iii. 16). In olden times, graves did not pollute: cf. 1 Sam. xxv. 1; 1 Kings ii. 34.

in their high places: a reference to these shrines is here out of place; unless the words are a gloss due to a scribe who did not understand the reason of Ezekiel's indignation, the reading of R. V. marg., 'in their death,' is to be preferred.

8. This refers to the arrangements of Solomon's temple and palace; see note on xlii. 20.

9. This profaning proximity, which was at first quite innocent in intention, and for which Solomon is never blamed, is to Ezekiel 'whoredom,' like the idolatrous practices of chapters viii, ix.

xliii. 10–12. *Summary of the Message which the Prophet is to carry to Israel.* The mere sight of the plan of the house, with all the horror of profanation which its symmetrical measurements imply, ought to be enough to cause them shame for the past. Their shame, if they feel it, will privilege them to learn the details of the 'house' and its ritual, that so they may be preserved, by obedience, from further possibilities of driving Yahweh from their midst. The chief point to be maintained is the holiness of the whole space at the summit of the hill.

10. let them measure: LXX alters to 'and the appearance and its arrangement,' parallel to 'the house.' The 'house' has already been measured; but that is no reason why the people should not work out the measures for themselves. For this shame, cf. xxxvi. 32, xliv. 6, 7, and chaps. viii, ix. Was ever a Utopia so introduced?

11. The four-times-repeated 'forms' must be wrong; the LXX, however, is not less pleonastic (cf. verse 3, note).

them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the laws thereof, and write it in their sight: that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.

12 This is the law of the house: upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.

13 And these are the measures of the altar by cubits:

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12. This is the law of . . .: the usual formula in the Priests' code (Lev. vi. 9, vii. 1, xi. 46; Num. v. 29, vi. 21, &c.), though it does not occur in Deuteronomy or in the 'Law of Holiness.'

xliii. 13–17. *The Dimensions of the Great Altar.* These are not actually given as Yahweh's words, nor, as in chaps. xl–xlii, as dimensions taken by the angel.

Solomon's temple had contained the bronze altar (1 Kings viii. 64) of burnt offering: the material was an innovation, through the influence of the Phoenician Huram-Abi. This was set aside in favour of a new Assyrian model by Ahaz (2 Kings xvi. 10 ff.). The measurements are given in 2 Chron. iv. 1 as twenty cubits in length and width (it would have occupied the whole floor-space of Ezekiel's inner shrine), and ten cubits in height. In Exod. xx. 24, the altar is to be of earth, or, at most, of unhewn stones; to use an iron tool on it is pollution. Ezekiel does not mention the material of his altar, but there can be no doubt that it is to be built of stone, and the precision with which he describes it implies that it is completely different from the old altar. The altar was the first thing set up by the returning exiles (Ezra iii. 2). At Taanach an altar of baked earth has been recently discovered, decorated with figures of winged creatures like sphinxes or cherubs.

13. the altar: already mentioned in xl. 47. Its consecration is the type and completion of that of the whole building. The difficulties of the text are due largely to the obscurity of the technical terms translated 'bottom,' 'border,' 'settle.' The general shape, however, is clear: the altar is composed of four square stones, one above another, decreasing in extent and increasing in thickness. The highest is a square of twelve cubits, and the height of the tip of the horns at each corner from the ground (reckoning the horns as each one cubit high) is also twelve cubits, or about twenty-one feet; the steps by which it is approached are mentioned in verse 17.

(the cubit is a cubit and an handbreadth :) the bottom shall be a cubit, and the breadth a cubit, and the border thereof by the edge thereof round about a span : and this shall be the base of the altar. And from the bottom 14

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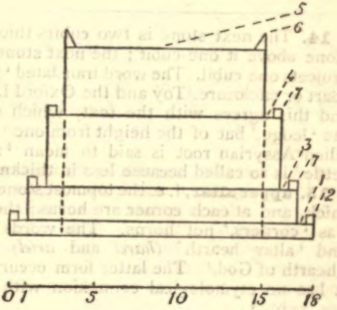
a cubit and an handbreadth : cf. xl. 5.

the bottom (see Plan E), literally 'bosom,' is variously interpreted as a 'channel' (Smend), or more probably as a basement (Cornill). Elsewhere (1 Kings xxii. 35) the word is used for the interior of a chariot. The basement may have been hollowed out ; but the 'border' (*vid. infr.*) would be enough to give it a hollowed appearance. It is a cubit thick, and projects a cubit each way beyond the stone placed on it.

1. Bosom, xliii. 13.
2. Border, xliii. 13.
3. Lower or lesser settle, xliii. 14.
4. Greater settle, xliii. 15.
5. Upper altar, xliii. 15.
6. Horns, xliii. 15.
7. Borders implied in xliii. 17.



PLAN E. SECTION OF ALTAR.

the border : used of land or territory (e. g. Job xxxviii. 20 ; Mal. i. 4), and of the 'barriers' in the gate-house in xl. 12. Here a rim of a span, or half a cubit, running along the edge of the possibly hollowed 'bottom.' Kraetzschmar holds that 'border' cannot be used of what is vertical, and so regards the surface of the 'bottom' as being hollowed next to the stone lying on it, and as having a flat portion, the 'border,' next the outside edge. According to tradition a subterranean channel conveyed the blood from this hollow to the Kidron.

the base : the same word is used in xvi. 24, 31—'an eminent place' ; it is used, chiefly in late Hebrew, for anything convex—of the back of a man or the boss of a shield. 'Bottom' and 'border' make up the base of the altar proper.

upon the ground to the lower settle shall be two cubits, and the breadth one cubit; and from the lesser settle to the greater settle shall be four cubits, and the breadth
15 a cubit. And the upper altar shall be four cubits; and from the altar hearth and upward there shall be four
16 horns. And the altar hearth shall be twelve *cubits* long
17 by twelve broad, square in the four sides thereof. And the settle shall be fourteen *cubits* long by fourteen broad in the four sides thereof; and the border about it shall

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14. The next stone is two cubits thick, and projects from the stone above it one cubit; the next stone is four cubits thick, and projects one cubit. The word translated 'settle' elsewhere means a court or enclosure. Toy and the Oxford Lexicon translate 'ledge'; and this agrees with the text, which speaks of the breadth of the 'ledge,' but of the height from one 'ledge' to another. The allied Assyrian root is said to mean 'narrowing.' 'The lesser settle' is so called because less in thickness.

15. upper altar, i. e. the topmost stone. This too is four cubits thick, and at each corner are horns; the altar within the temple has 'corners,' not horns. The words translated 'upper altar' and 'altar hearth' (*harel* and *ariel*) are probably the same, 'hearth of God.' The latter form occurs in Mesha's inscription; it has no etymological connexion with 'ariel,' 'lion of God,' in Isa. xxix. 1.

horns. LXX gives their height as a cubit. Horns are mentioned in connexion with the Davidic altar in 1 Kings i. 50, ii. 28. These passages, with Amos iii. 14, would imply that they formed a peculiarly sacred part of the altar. They may be a survival of the same feeling which prompted the worship of a bull image of Yahweh in the northern kingdom (1 Kings xii. 28); Ezekiel, ignoring their idolatrous associations, retains them like the pillars (xl. 49). The oldest altars, simply built of unhewn stone, would seem to have possessed no horns (Exod. xx. 25).

17. the settle, i. e. the stone below the 'harel'; its breadth (in verse 14, one cubit) is now measured from side to side, i. e. fourteen cubits (1 + 12 + 1). We should have expected also a mention of the 'lesser' settle. The 'harel' is thus a square of twelve cubits and the 'base' of eighteen cubits; the same proportion (2 : 3) is preserved in the temple. Kliefoth and Cornill hold that the altar was really a cube, and that the ledges were the terminations of side-walls; this is far less simple, and involves violence to the text.

be half a cubit; and the bottom thereof shall be a cubit about; and the steps thereof shall look toward the east.
And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the 18
Lord God: These are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon. Thou shalt 19
give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which are near unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord God, a young bullock for a sin offering.

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the border about it implies that each ledge had a hollow or rim like the 'bottom.'

the steps. In Exod. xx. 25 'steps' are prohibited. They are so arranged that in approaching the altar one faces the temple. The description of the altar in the Priests' code is given briefly in Exod. xxvii. 1-8; it is but three cubits high.

xliii. 18-27. *The Consecration of the Altar.* This is really the consecration of the whole temple: cf. Exod. xxix. 38-46; Lev. viii, where seven days' sacrifices are contemplated (so verse 26). The Priests' code pays far more attention to the consecration of the priests, which is not mentioned by Ezekiel. Nothing of this kind is said to have taken place at the dedication of Solomon's temple. Kraetzschmar, observing the changes from second sing. to third plur., argues that the passage contains 'doublets' or parallel recensions, in the first of which (verse 19 to the first words of verse 22 and 23 f.) the priests act as the subordinates of Ezekiel, and in the second (parts of 22, 25, and 26 f.) the priests act together. But Ezekiel nowhere else regards himself as receiving a special commission of this kind; he is simply to direct the other priests and to act with them; Ezekiel knows nothing of any office corresponding to that of 'high-priest.' That the language is general is shown by the vague third pers. sing. in verse 21.

18. The speaker here is the angel who acts as Yahweh's spokesman. The phrase 'thus saith Yahweh God' occurs here for the first time, and, with the exception of xliv. 2 and 5, introduces each provision throughout the remainder of the book. The second half of the verse gives the two main purposes of the altar.

19. the priests the Levites: see note on xliv. 10.

sin offering. This offering is now first brought into prominence. In early Israelite religion expiatory offerings were rare. The altar needs 'atonement' (verses 20, 26) as having

20 And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou
21 cleanse it and make atonement for it. Thou shalt also take the bullock of the sin offering, and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, without the sanc-
22 tuary. And on the second day thou shalt offer a he-goat without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse
23 the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock. When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the
24 flock without blemish. And thou shalt bring them near before the LORD, and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up for a burnt offering
25 unto the LORD. Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without

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been previously profane; it is now made 'holy,' i. e. placed in the category of things which have a special relation to the deity; the 'sin' has thus nothing to do with moral misdeeds.

20. In Exod. xxix. 12 only the horns are sprinkled with blood; the rest is poured on the earth.

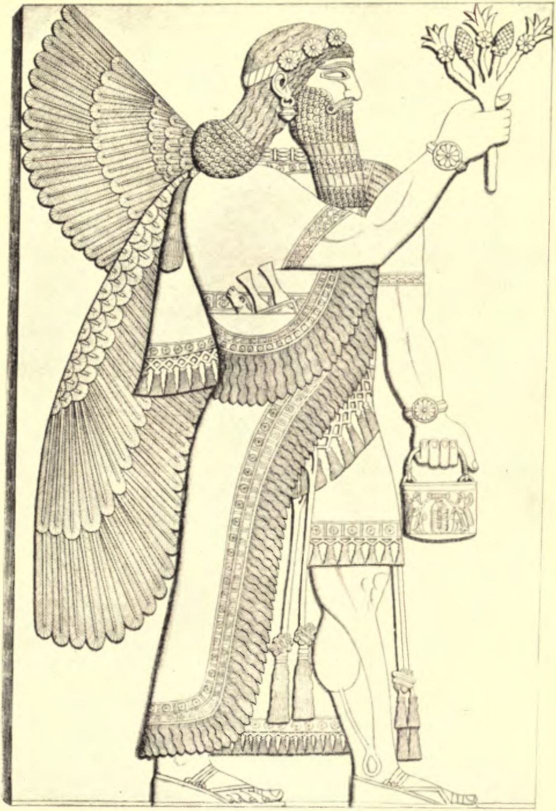
21. the appointed place. Smend would place this in the fifty-cubits-broad space round the temple enclosure (xlv. 2). Cf. Neh. iii. 31; *Miphkad* is the Hebrew expression here translated by 'the appointed place.' The sin-offering is counted as unclean, the uncleanness of the altar being regarded as transferred to it. 'He' should be rendered 'one' (cf. xlvi. 12).

22. The change of animals for the sacrifices is perhaps due to a desire for completeness.

23. The burnt offering can only take place when the sin-offering is completed. Blemish implies impurity.

24. salt: cf. Mark ix. 49. In the Priests' code salt is only used in the case of food-offerings (Lev. ii. 13) and in connexion (as in the modern Orient) with the idea of a covenant: cf. Num. xviii. 19.

25. If the expression here is precise (a goat, a bullock, and a ram each day) it must be taken as supplementing verses 19 and 22, which seems hardly probable.



From Layard's "Nineveh."

ASSYRIAN DEITY

blemish. Seven days shall they make atonement for the 26
altar and purify it; so shall they consecrate it. And 27
when they have accomplished the days, it shall be that
upon the eighth day, and forward, the priests shall make
your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace
offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD.

Then he brought me back the way of the outer gate 44
of the sanctuary, which looketh toward the east; and it
was shut. And the LORD said unto me, This gate shall 2
be shut, it shall not be opened, neither shall any man
enter in by it, for the LORD, the God of Israel, hath
entered in by it; therefore it shall be shut. As for the 3
prince, he shall sit therein as prince to eat bread before

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26. consecrate it: *lit.* 'fill its hands,' a term originally used of the priests, and pointing back to the early period when a private person hired a priest to perform the religious rites which he desired: cf. Judges xvii. 10.

27. After this dedication the ordinary sacrifices begin. The burnt-offering is placed entirely on the altar; of the peace-offering only the fat and the blood, which is still (xliv. 7)Yahweh's food.

accept, a technical term for the favour with which Yahweh receives those who come before him with due precautions to preserve their holiness.

xliv. 1–3. *The Outer Eastern Gate and the Prince.*

1. In xliii. 5 Ezekiel has been standing in the inner court; now he is led to the gate at which the angel's measurements began, and finds it shut, after Yahweh's entrance. For a similar restriction in a pagan temple, cf. 1 Sam. v. 5.

2. the LORD said unto me: see note on xliii. 18. This phrase, repeated in verse 5, appears to denote words actually used by Yahweh instead of by the angel.

3. On the 'prince,' see notes on xxxiv. 22, xxxvii. 24; here and in chap. xlvi he is the representative rather than the ruler or 'shepherd' of the people, and he is carefully shut out from exercising the old priestly functions of the kings (cf. 1 Kings viii. 22, 54, ix. 25; 2 Kings xvi. 12; Jer. xxx. 21). He does not enter through the gate-house, whose outer entrance is now closed, but from the vestibule which (xl. 8) faced inwards. To 'eat bread before Yahweh' is to partake of the sacrificial meal; the phrase is

the LORD; he shall enter by the way of the porch of the
4 gate, and shall go out by the way of the same. Then he
brought me the way of the north gate before the house;
and I looked, and behold, the glory of the LORD filled
5 the house of the LORD: and I fell upon my face. And
the LORD said unto me, Son of man, mark well, and
behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears all that
I say unto thee concerning all the ordinances of the
house of the LORD, and all the laws thereof; and mark
well the entering in of the house, with every going forth
6 of the sanctuary. And thou shalt say to the rebellious,
even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD:
O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your
7 abominations, in that ye have brought in aliens, uncir-
cumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in
my sanctuary, to profane it, even my house, when ye
offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have

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more applicable to the older Israelite custom than to Ezekiel's dispositions.

xliv. 4–14. *The Disabilities of Foreigners and Levites.*

4. Ezekiel is now brought through the north gate of the inner court (see xlvi. 1) to the front of the temple; once more Yahweh's voice is heard coming out of the temple (cf. xliii. 6).

5. This introduction emphasizes the importance of what is to follow.

6. to the rebellious: *lit.* 'to rebelliousness,' a stern echo of the frequent phrase in the earlier part of the book; not used since chap. xii, save in xvii. 12 and xxiv. 3. For the phrase 'let it suffice,' cf. xlv. 9 and 1 Pet. iv. 3.

7. In the old régime, prisoners of war would seem to have been used for temple servants (Joshua ix. 23), and foreigners were freely enlisted in the royal bodyguard (Ithra the Gittite, the Cherethites and Pelethites: cf. also 2 Kings xi. 4). For foreigners in the community, cf. Deut. xxix. 10; the 'Nethinim' were probably descended from such foreigners; Ezra ii. 43, 58; Neh. xi. 21. To be uncircumcized in flesh was, to Ezekiel, to be uncircumcized in heart; the covenant of xxxvi. 24 ff. was made only with Israel.

the fat and the blood: cf. verse 15, and see note on xliii. 27.

broken my covenant, *to add* unto all your abominations.
And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: 8
but ye have set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary
for yourselves. Thus saith the Lord GOD, No alien, 9
uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, shall
enter into my sanctuary, of any alien that is among the
children of Israel. But the Levites that went far from 10
me, when Israel went astray, which went astray from me

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8. The real meaning, which a slight change would place in the text, is 'ye have set them as keepers' (cf. Zech. xiv. 21).

9. This prohibition was preserved in Herod's temple by inscriptions, one of which still exists.

10. the Levites. Till now, Levites and Priests had been identified, and regarded as distinct from the rest of the nation (cf. Deut. xviii. 1, 6, xxxiii. 9). They had no tribal inheritance save the revenues of the priesthood (cf. xliv. 28), and it is doubtful whether, originally, officiating priests or Levites were restricted to any one tribe (cf. Judges xvii, xix; in 2 Sam. viii. 18, David's sons are 'priests'); the original tribe almost lost its separate existence (Gen. xlix. 7). In Deuteronomy, the distinction is not between priests and Levites (all legitimate priests are Levitical, Deut. xviii. 1; 1 Kings xii. 31: cf. Joshua iii. 3), but between the city 'clergy' and the country 'clergy'; the latter, dispossessed from their 'cures' by the abolition of the country shrines, are to gain priestly rights as soon as they are resident in Jerusalem (Deut. xviii. 6: cf. xxxi. 9, 25). This arrangement would not be likely to meet with the approbation of the Zadokite priests in Jerusalem, established there by Solomon (verse 15: cf. 1 Kings ii. 27, iv. 4); their pride of place was perhaps enforced by a moral superiority (though, in spite of verse 15, Ezekiel, chaps. viii–x, shows that later on worship in Jerusalem had sunk as low as was well possible); and in this section Ezekiel assigns a moral reason for an arrangement whereby, contravening Deuteronomy, the successors of the 'country clergy,' to whom he will not allow the title of priests, are to remain subordinate, performing the offices which he has taken from the foreigners (cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 9). Cf. note on xl. 45, 46; from this the Levites apparently had previously enjoyed access to all the priestly portions of the temple-building. In the Priests' code, the distinction between priests and Levites is thoroughgoing; but the legitimate priests are 'sons of Aaron,' and not simply of Zadok; Baudissin, like Dillmann (see especially *Dict. Bib.*, art. 'PRIESTS') holds that this code is earlier than Ezekiel; but the real facts probably are, not that Ezekiel narrowed down an exist-

11 after their idols; they shall bear their iniquity. Yet they shall be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house, and ministering in the house: they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister
12 unto them. Because they ministered unto them before their idols, and became a stumblingblock of iniquity unto the house of Israel; therefore have I lifted up mine hand against them, saith the Lord GOD, and they shall bear
13 their iniquity. And they shall not come near unto me, to execute the office of priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things, unto the things that are most holy: but they shall bear their shame, and their abomina-
14 tions which they have committed. Yet will I make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein.

15 But the priests the Levites, the sons of Zadok, that

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ing arrangement, but that Ezekiel's arrangement had, by the time of Ezra, proved unworkably narrow. Cf. Num. xvii. 2-5, xviii. 2, 3.[1]

11. These disestablished priests have, like the Zadokites, two sets of duties, outer and inner. In the Priests' code, the animals are slain either by the priests or by the offerer (Lev. i. 5, iii. 8), not by the Levites; in Chronicles (2 Chron. xxix. 34, xxx. 17) the Levites help to kill the sacrifices. In xlvi. 2, the priests kill the offerings of the prince; also the sin- and guilt-offerings.

13. most holy, *lit.* 'the holy of the holy things': cf. note on xli. 4.

14. Cf. note on xl. 45.

xliv. 15-27. *The Restrictions and Duties which concern the Zadokite Priests.* These restrictions are of the nature of 'taboos'; in all early religions, the more important a person is (especially as priest or king, or as being at some crisis of life) the greater

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[1] See also article 'PRIEST' (Robertson Smith and Cheyne) in *Enc. Bibl.* The arguments for the traditional view (that high-priest, priests, and Levites were distinct from the time of Moses) will be found in Orr, *The Problem of the O. T.*, pp. 181 ff., 316 ff.

kept the charge of my sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me to minister unto me; and they shall stand before me to offer unto me the fat and the blood, saith the Lord GOD:
they shall enter into my sanctuary, and they shall come 16
near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge. And it shall be that when they enter 17
in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them,

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number of the things he may not do or touch, on pain of incurring or causing some penalty natural or supernatural. Other things are restricted to priests, kings, &c.—i. e. they are 'taboo' to ordinary people. The 'Flamen Dialis' of Rome, for example, was surrounded by a whole network of 'taboos.' The general notion of 'taboo' thus gives rise to the notions both of the holy and the unclean. The origins of these feelings of horror at certain actions and objects are generally very obscure; in Israel the resulting traditional prohibitions were to a certain extent capable of modification, and they often seem to aim at either hygiene or distinction from similar heathen practices.[1]

15. See note on verse 10. Zadok had held to Solomon while Abiathar fell off to Adonijah (1 Kings i. 25, ii. 26). Jeremiah himself came from the country priesthood, at Anathoth. The older priestly family of Eli would seem to have been previously set aside.

16. my table: Smend and Bertholet interpret this of the table of shewbread: cf. note on xli. 22; but from xl. 46 it seems better to identify it with the altar of burnt offering, as verse 15 also implies (so Davidson and Kraetzschmar).

17. linen: cf. ix. 2; also Dan. x. 5, xii. 6. The reason is given in the next verse; it was used also by Egyptian priests (Hdt. ii. 37). Cf. Exod. xxviii. 42, xxxix. 28; Lev. vi. 10, viii. 2; of the high-priest's clothing, of course, nothing is said; and the technical terms for the priest's clothing differ in Ezekiel and the Priests' code. This robing evidently takes place in the chambers by the inner gate-houses (xl. 44 ff.), and not in the blocks of cells (xlii. 1 ff.).

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[1] See Robertson Smith's *Rel. Sem.*, 2nd ed., pp. 152 ff., 446 ff.; Frazer's *Golden Bough*, vol. i, pp. 120 f., 170 ff.; Jevons' *Introd. to Study of Religion*, ch. v.

whiles they minister in the gates of the inner court, and
18 within. They shall have linen tires upon their heads,
and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they
shall not gird themselves with *any thing that causeth*
19 sweat. And when they go forth into the outer court,
even into the outer court to the people, they shall put off
their garments wherein they minister, and lay them in
the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments,
that they sanctify not the people with their garments.
20 Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their
locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads.

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18. sweat: the word occurs nowhere else, but is apparently identical in meaning, as almost in form, with that which occurs in Gen. iii. 19. A similar dread of sweat was felt in Egypt.

19. Cf. xlii. 14. For this change of clothing, cf. Gen. xxxv. 2; Exod. xix. 10; 2 Kings x. 22; also Isa. lxv. 5; Hag. ii. 12; Exod. xxx. 29; Lev. vi. 11; Mark v. 28; Acts xix. 12, and the elaborate 'vestments' of the Catholic Church.

that they sanctify not: a 'layman,' touched by what belonged to priests, would be made 'holy,' i. e. subjected to priestly restrictions (cf. xlvi. 20; Exod. xxix. 37; Lev. vi. 27). This conception of 'holiness' as an almost physical contagion is widespread in early religions; but it is transformed when, as in Israel, it is centred in Yahweh as its source. Robertson Smith (*op. cit.*, p. 451) gives instances (from Arabia and New Zealand) which show that clothes worn at a ceremony in a holy place could not be used again. After an examination of the remains of very early Semitic worship at the temple of Serabit-Ishtar on the Sinai peninsula, Flinders Petrie says, 'We see how much of Mosaism was a carrying on of older ritual; and how that movement was a monotheistic reformation of existing rites.'

20. Baldness is a sign of mourning (vii. 18). The Nazirites let their hair grow long: cf. 1 Sam. i. 11; Num. vi. 5. If cut off or allowed to grow too long the hair might be polluted. Lev. xix. 27 prohibits this hair-cutting, mentioning also the beard, to the laity as well, while it is the high-priest alone (Lev. xxi. 5, 10) who may not have long hair. The prohibition is probably a protest against heathen customs (cf. Deut. xiv. 1), the hair being the symbol of the worshipper's life (see Rob. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 323, 481 ff.). All Egyptians of position were shaved.

Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into 21
the inner court. Neither shall they take for their wives 22
a widow, nor her that is put away: but they shall take
virgins of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow
that is the widow of a priest. And they shall teach my 23
people the difference between the holy and the common,
and cause them to discern between the unclean and the
clean. And in a controversy they shall stand to judge; 24
according to my judgements shall they judge it: and
they shall keep my laws and my statutes in all my appointed feasts; and they shall hallow my sabbaths. And 25
they shall come at no dead person to defile themselves:
but for father, or for mother, or for son, or for daughter,
for brother, or for sister that hath had no husband,
they may defile themselves. And after he is cleansed, 26

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21. Wine was a distinctively Canaanite product. Cf. Lev. x. 9; also Amos ii. 12; Jer. xxxv. 6.

22. Later, the restriction to marriage with only Israelite women was extended to the whole community (Ezra ix. 12; Neh. x. 30). The further restriction in the case of widows is applied only to the high-priest in Lev. xxi. 13.

23. This 'instruction' had always formed a large part of the duty of the priests, and would be the more important while a written law was unknown.

24. The LXX adds 'in a matter of life and death.' Previously the kings had been judges (cf. 1 Kings iii. 16 ff.). In Deuteronomy some 'controversies' had been assigned to the priests (xvii. 8, xix. 17, xxi. 5); others, connected with the family, to the 'elders of the city' (xxi. 19, xxii. 15). The perfect obedience to Yahweh in the new state does not render disagreements impossible; but Ezekiel is thinking here of the general duties of the priests as he holds that they ought to be.

hallow, i. e. arrange generally: cf. xx. 12, xxii. 8, xlvi. 1.

25. A protest against the cult of the dead, to whom the hair cut off at funerals was offered. The omission of the wife is noteworthy (so Lev. xxi. 1-3); relationship is still governed by blood. For 'sister that hath had no husband,' cf. verse 22. 'Defile themselves,' i.e. by touching the dead. In Lev. xxi. 11 the high-priest is forbidden to go near any dead body. See also Num. xix. 14.

26. The length of time he is to remain impure before the further

27 they shall reckon unto him seven days. And in the day that he goeth into the sanctuary, into the inner court, to minister in the sanctuary, he shall offer his sin
28 offering, saith the Lord God. And they shall have an inheritance; I am their inheritance: and ye shall give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession.
29 They shall eat the meal offering, and the sin offering, and the guilt offering; and every devoted thing in Israel
30 shall be theirs. And the first of all the firstfruits of

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seven days' 'quarantine' begins is not stated; it was perhaps the ordinary seven days of Num. xix. 11.

sin offering: cf. xliii. 26. In priestly language the purely ritual misdemeanour of touching a corpse is a 'sin'; hence, piacular sacrifices are not necessarily connected with wilful wrongdoing: cf. xlv. 20, and Robertson Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 408.

xliv. 28–31. *The Revenues of the Priests.* For this list of dues, the 'Tariff of Marseilles,' a Phoenician inscription containing the dues of the temple there, may be compared (see Cooke's *North Semitic Inscriptions*, p. 113). The Babylonian temples had also their stated revenues, either in food or money, in addition to which they often had large private estates (like mediaeval abbeys) and did much banking business. (See Johns's *Babylonian Laws, Contracts, and Letters.*)

28. Since no distinction can be made between 'inheritance' and 'possession' a negative seems wanting in the first clause. The words 'I am their possession' refer to verses 29, 30; xlv. 1–8 (cf. xlviii. 10) involves an apparent infraction of this principle. Cf. Jos. xiii. 14; Deut. xviii. 1; Lev. vii. 31; Num. xviii. 20; for earlier times, 1 Sam. ii. 13–16. The tithe is referred to in Amos iv. 4, and developed in Num. xviii. 21 ff. Ezekiel does not mention it, though, since it is ordained in Deut. xii. 6 ff., xiv. 23, he must have known of it.

29. For the meal-offering, cf. 1 Sam. xxi. 6; 2 Kings xxiii. 9; and for the sin- and guilt-offerings, 2 Kings xii. 16, and Ezek. xl. 39; also Lev. vi. 20, vii. 5; Num. xviii. 9. Previous to Ezekiel, these latter had been money-fines. 'They' is here emphatic, as if the point had previously been doubtful. The 'devoted thing' was that on which a 'ban' or 'taboo' had been placed: cf. Josh. vii. 1, 15; 1 Sam. xv. 3; also Lev. xxvii. 28; Num. xviii. 14.

30. Only the best of the first-fruits is for the priest; the rest is for the offerer: cf. Exod. xxiii. 16, 19; Deut. xii. 6, xviii. 4.

every thing, and every oblation of every thing, of all
your oblations, shall be for the priests: ye shall also give
unto the priest the first of your dough, to cause a blessing
to rest on thine house. The priests shall not eat of any 31
thing that dieth of itself, or is torn, whether it be fowl or
beast.

Moreover, when ye shall divide by lot the land for **45**
inheritance, ye shall offer an oblation unto the LORD, an
holy portion of the land: the length shall be the length
of five and twenty thousand *reeds*, and the breadth shall
be ten thousand: it shall be holy in all the border
thereof round about. Of this there shall be for the holy 2

Later (Num. xviii. 12, 13) the entire oblation goes to the priests; larger provisions would be needed for the priests when a costly ritual had to be maintained in a feeble community. In 1 Sam. ii. 13 ff. there is no law for these free-will offerings.

dough: the term is obscure, and is otherwise explained as course meal or a kneading-trough.

31. Cf. iv. 14. In Ex. xxii. 31; Deut. xiv. 21; Lev. xxii. 8. This rule applies to the whole community; in Lev. xvii. 15 a transgression of it involves a day's uncleanness. Ezekiel mentions no penalties, nor does he seem to contemplate the possibility of disobedience.

xlv. 1-8. *The Estates of the Priests* (verses 1-4), *the Levites* (5), *the City* (6), *and the Prince* (7, 8): cf. xlviii. 8 ff. In accordance with Ezekiel's symmetrical conception of the holiness alike of temple and of land, the temple is to be exactly in the centre of the land; around it the priests are to have their estates; together these will occupy a rectangle of 25,000 × 10,000 cubits; north are the Levitical estates of an equal area; south a rectangle 25,000 × 5,000 cubits is given up to the city and the lands assigned to it, in the centre of which is the city itself, and the open spaces round it (a square of 5,000 cubits), and on either sides are its fields. Thus the whole forms a square of which each side is 25,000 cubits, or about 8⅓ miles. On either side, to the east and west limits of the land, lie the prince's estates. North are seven of the tribes; south five. See Plan F, p. 349.

1. oblation is the term used for both portions of the priests' revenues, including the temple itself (cf. xliv. 28).

ten thousand should be, as LXX, 20,000 (see verse 5, xlviii. 13).

place five hundred *in length* by five hundred *in breadth*,
square round about; and fifty cubits for the suburbs
3 thereof round about. And of this measure shalt thou
measure, a length of five and twenty thousand, and
a breadth of ten thousand: and in it shall be the sanc-
4 tuary, which is most holy. It is an holy portion of the
land; it shall be for the priests, the ministers of the
sanctuary, which come near to minister unto the Lord;
and it shall be a place for their houses, and an holy
5 place for the sanctuary. And five and twenty thousand
in length, and ten thousand in breadth, shall be unto the
Levites, the ministers of the house, for a possession unto
6 themselves, *for* twenty chambers. And ye shall appoint
the possession of the city five thousand broad, and five
and twenty thousand long, side by side with the oblation
of the holy portion: it shall be for the whole house of
7 Israel. And *whatsoever is* for the prince *shall be* on the

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2. suburbs means open space or 'commons,' outside the temple-walls, so that the agriculture even of the priests does not touch these.

4. This verse refers immediately to verse 1, which Cornill would make it follow. The R.V. conceals the tautology of the Hebrew of the last clause, 'and a sanctuary for the sanctuary'; for the first word 'suburbs' (as in verse 2) can easily be substituted.

5. For the obscure 'twenty chambers' LXX reads 'cities to dwell in': cf. Num. xxxv. 2; Joshua xiv. 4, xxi. 2. Kautzsch reads 'twenty cities,' in contrast to Joshua xxi. 4-7 and Num. xxxv. 7, where the number is forty-eight. In Numbers the cities are scattered up and down the country; and some of the cities did not come into the possession of Israel till late. Before the exile the Levites, like the strangers, are commended to public charity (Deut. xii. 12, xiv. 27, &c.).

6. Members of all the tribes will dwell in the capital.

7. *whatsoever is* **for the prince.** This expression hardly does justice to the large and definite demesne. 'Ezekiel does not show the road to Canossa' (Skinner); but the civil or political sphere in which the prince will be supreme must be very rigidly limited (cf. even xliv. 24; contrast Amos vii. 13).

one side and on the other side of the holy oblation and of the possession of the city, in front of the holy oblation and in front of the possession of the city, on the west side westward, and on the east side eastward: and in length answerable unto one of the portions, from the west border unto the east border. In the land it shall 8
be to him for a possession in Israel: and my princes shall no more oppress my people; but they shall give the land to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: Let it suffice you, O 9
princes of Israel: remove violence and spoil, and execute judgement and justice; take away your exactions from my people, saith the Lord GOD. Ye shall have just 10
balances, and a just ephah, and a just bath. The ephah 11
and the bath shall be of one measure, that the bath

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8. my princes: apparently a succession is expected here: cf. note on xxxiv. 23. For 'they shall give' (a proceeding of the possibility of which these chapters contain no hint elsewhere) LXX reads 'the house of Israel shall inherit the land.'

xlv. 9-17. *Duties and Rights of the Prince.* In chap. xxxiv Ezekiel had contrasted the Oriental oppressions of the kings with the protecting rule of the coming shepherd; here he is thinking more of the necessity of guarding against oppression in the future; hence the different attitude towards the 'prince,' whose wealth will be needed because of the large offerings he will have to make as the people's representative (verse 17).

9. exactions, or, as R. V. marg., 'expulsions': cf. 1 Kings xxi. 1-16; Isa. v. 8; Mic. ii. 9.

10. This would seem to imply the absence or scarcity of coined money: cf. Jer. xxxii. 9. Fraudulent weights and measures constituted a social and commercial evil against which all parts of the O.T. protest: cf. Amos viii. 5; Hos. xii. 7; Mic. vi. 10; Deut. xxv. 13; Lev. xix. 35; Prov. xi. 1, xvi. 11, xx. 10.

just: the root of 'justice' or 'righteousness' signifies the 'condition or disposition which corresponds to an objective norm' (Kautzsch); hence it can be applied either to a balance or to Yahweh.

11. These definitions of old measures are given to avoid the capricious alterations of the kings in times past. In later times,

may contain the tenth part of an homer, and the ephah
the tenth part of an homer: the measure thereof shall be
12 after the homer. And the shekel shall be twenty gerahs:
twenty shekels, five and twenty shekels, fifteen shekels,
13 shall be your maneh. This is the oblation that ye shall
offer; the sixth part of an ephah from an homer of
wheat, and ye shall give the sixth part of an ephah
14 from an homer of barley: and the set portion of oil,
of the bath of oil, shall be the tenth part of a bath out of
the cor, *which is* ten baths, even an homer; for ten baths
15 are an homer: and one lamb of the flock, out of two

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also, sovereigns have found no more tempting or more disastrous way of increasing their revenues than by debasing the coinage. The ephah and the bath were each the tenth of a homer, the former for dry, the latter for liquid measures. The homer was approximately equal to eleven bushels and ninety gallons.

12. The money shekel approximately equals 2*s.* 6*d.*; half and quarter shekels are mentioned. In Exod. xxx. 13, Lev. xxvii. 25, Num. iii. 47, xviii. 16 the shekel of twenty gerahs is further defined as 'the shekel of the sanctuary'; the absence of the mention of the 'gerah' previously would imply that it was still a new coin (cf. note on iv. 10).

The second half of the verse is meaningless. Read, with LXX (Alex.), 'five (shekels) shall be five, and ten shekels ten, and fifty shekels shall be your mina': i. e. no one shall take more than a shekel for a shekel. In both the Phoenician and Babylonian systems the mina contained sixty shekels when used for ordinary purposes, and fifty shekels when used for precious metals (a sort of 'Troy' measure); and the identity of the amount of Hezekiah's indemnity to Sennacherib, as recorded in 2 Kings xviii. 14, with the Assyrian record confirms the probability that Hebrew and Babylonian measures would coincide.

13. As verse 16 explains, this commences the account of the revenues of the prince, to which, as being an indirect tithe, the term 'oblation' is applied. All these contributions are to be paid in kind. Nehemiah imposed a poll-tax of ⅓ shekel (Neh x. 32), the Priests' code, ½ shekel (Exod. xxx. 11–16).

14. The homer and the cor are identical (see 1 Kings iv. 22, v. 11; 2 Chron. ii. 10, xxvii. 5); the bath is thus equal to the ephah. The amounts to be paid were 1% of oil, 1⅔% of wheat and barley, and ½% of the lambs.

hundred, from the fat pastures of Israel; for a meal offering and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to make atonement for them, saith the Lord GOD. All 16 the people of the land shall give unto this oblation for the prince in Israel. And it shall be the prince's part to 17 give the burnt offerings, and the meal offerings, and the drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meal offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to make atonement for the house of Israel.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: In the first *month*, in the 18 first *day* of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish; and thou shalt cleanse the sanctuary.

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15. fat pastures, *lit.* 'well-watered'; what, then, of the rest? LXX, with slight change, reads 'out of all the families of Israel.'

17. The kings had been accustomed to provide the public offerings (2 Sam. xxiv. 24; 1 Kings viii. 63, ix. 25; 2 Kings xvi. 13). Ezekiel is silent as to private sacrifices, as Deuteronomy is silent as to public sacrifices.

atonement: see notes on verse 20 and xliv. 27.

xlv. 18-25. *The Half-yearly Festivals; the Passover and the Harvest.* The year is divided into two halves, each of which begins with a day of atonement (contrast Lev. xvi), which, after an interval of fourteen days, is followed by a seven days' festival, Passover (first month), and Booths (seventh month). The Babylonian year began in the spring; the Hebrew year here begins at the same time. In Ezekiel the festivals lose all their old character, partly surviving in Deut. xvi, of agricultural rejoicings, and Whitsuntide ('Weeks') drops out altogether, though it occurs in both Exod. xxiii. 16; Deut. xvi. 10; and the Priests' code. In each case the stated offerings differ from the parallel offerings in the Priests' code; sometimes one, sometimes the other is more costly. Like the Priests' code, but unlike the earlier legislation, Ezekiel fixes his festivals by the days of the month; on the other hand, he is never in direct contradiction to Deuteronomy, and he assigns as the length of his festivals, not eight days (as the Priests' code), but seven (as Deuteronomy: cf. also 1 Kings viii. 66; 2 Chron. vii. 9; Neh. viii. 18).

19 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering, and put it upon the door posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar, and upon the
20 posts of the gate of the inner court. And so thou shalt do on the seventh *day* of the month for every one that erreth, and for him that is simple: so shall ye make
21 atonement for the house. In the first *month*, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.
22 And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin
23 offering. And the seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; and
24 a he-goat daily for a sin offering. And he shall prepare

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19. the priest who happens to be officiating. In spite of Ezekiel's silence on the high-priest (an official who does not seem to be mentioned before Haggai), there was already a chief priest in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Kings xii. 9, xxv. 18). The 'gate' will be presumably the east gate.

20. the seventh *day* of the month: this could hardly be, even if only for the sake of unintentional misdemeanours; why so soon after the first? The LXX reads, rightly, 'on the first day of the seventh month.' In spite of all precautions there may be error or misunderstanding; Ezekiel does not mention wilful sins. But the atonement is made, not directly for such error, but for the ceremonial impurity thus caused to the temple (an idea not found in Lev. xvi): cf. xliv. 27.

21. In Exod. xxxiv. 18, this month, according to the older reckoning, is called Abib, the seventh month; its later name was Nisan; and it corresponds to our March–April. We should probably read here 'fifteenth' for 'fourteenth,' as in verse 25, the fourteenth being introduced from H (Lev. xxiii. 5; see p. 31) and the Priests' code (Exod. xii. 18; Num. xxviii. 16); 'unleavened bread,' originally the chief feature of the festival, receives only a cursory mention.

23. A sin-offering at the Passover is new; the burnt-offering is surprisingly large; in Num. xxviii. 19, only two bulls, one goat, seven lambs; but Ezekiel has great faith in the fertility of the land.

a meal offering, an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil to an ephah. In the seventh 25
month, in the fifteenth day of the month, in the feast, shall he do the like the seven days; according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meal offering, and according to the oil.

Thus saith the Lord GOD: The gate of the inner court 46
that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath day it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened. And the 2
prince shall enter by the way of the porch of the gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace

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Neither Ezekiel nor Lev. xxiii contains any historical reference to the Passover, nor mentions the Passover lamb. For 'Weeks' there is no historical reference in the O.T. The Priests' code also provides for a ceremony in private houses, and takes account of slaves and sojourners.

25. the feast: i. e. the special or most prominent feast in the second half of the year (Judges xxi. 19; 1 Kings viii. 2, xii. 32); the great 'harvest-home'; apparently, this being a popular festival, Ezekiel refers to it hurriedly, not mentioning the 'booths.' In H (Lev. xxiii. 36) and the Priests' code (Num. xxix. 35) an eighth day is added. The Passover was originally a nomadic festival, which in later times became increasingly ecclesiastical. The old rule, that the people should appear three times a year before Yahweh (Exod. xxiii. 14, 17), is unmentioned.

xlvi. 1-7. *Sabbath and New-moon Festivals.* Sabbath and new-moon are mentioned together, 2 Kings iv. 23; Hos. ii. 11; Amos viii. 5; Isa. i. 13 (cf. xlv. 17). See note on xx. 12.

1. The outer east gate was always to be shut (xliv. 2); the inner is to remain open on Sabbaths and new-moons till the evening.

2. The prince may not pass beyond the inner gate into the inner court. He is to enter its vestibule, which faced the outer court, and stand on the threshold, immediately opposite the altar, watching the offering of his sacrifice. This is in sharp contrast to the practice of the earlier kings (1 Kings viii. 22; 2 Kings xvi. 12, 18, xxiii. 3): cf. xliv. 3.

offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate; then he shall go forth: but the gate shall not be
3 shut until the evening. And the people of the land shall worship at the door of that gate before the LORD in the
4 sabbaths and in the new moons. And the burnt offering that the prince shall offer unto the LORD shall be in the sabbath day six lambs without blemish and a ram without
5 blemish; and the meal offering shall be an ephah for the ram, and the meal offering for the lambs as he is able to
6 give, and an hin of oil to an ephah. And in the day of the new moon it shall be a young bullock without blemish; and six lambs, and a ram; they shall be
7 without blemish: and he shall prepare a meal offering, an ephah for the bullock, and an ephah for the ram, and for the lambs according as he is able, and an hin of oil
8 to an ephah. And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of the gate, and he shall go
9 forth by the way thereof. But when the people of the land shall come before the LORD in the appointed feasts,

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3. The worshippers are to stand at the outer entrance of the inner gate; they would thus be able to see through to the altar.

4. The six lambs correspond to the six working-days, the ram to the seventh; in Num. xxviii. 9 two lambs alone are mentioned.

5. The 'hin' is a sixth of the 'bath' (see xlv. 14).

6. For the new-moon festival, cf. 1 Sam. xx. 5 ff.; the day on which the new moon becomes visible is marked by the sabbath offering—one bullock; in Num. xxviii. 11 ff. the offering is larger, and a sin-offering and a drink-offering are added.

xlvi. 8-10. *The Passing in and out of the Worshippers.* The spaces being comparatively small (see note on xlii. 20) it was necessary to avoid inconvenient and unseemly crowding or loitering when the populace assembled in large numbers. We cannot suppose with Hengstenberg that Ezekiel wished to teach the spiritual lesson of Phil. iii. 13.

8. The prince must go out of the inner gate as he comes in, not passing through the forbidden inner court.

9. the appointed feasts: the special reference is naturally to he that entereth by the way of the north gate to worship shall go forth by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth straight before him. And the prince, when they go in, shall go 10 in in the midst of them; and when they go forth, they shall go forth *together*. And in the feasts and in the 11 solemnities the meal offering shall be an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and for the lambs as he is able to give, and an hin of oil to an ephah. And 12 when the prince shall prepare a freewill offering, a burnt offering or peace offerings as a freewill offering unto the LORD, one shall open for him the gate that looketh toward the east, and he shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, as he doth on the sabbath day: then he shall go forth; and after his going forth one shall shut the gate. And thou shalt prepare a lamb of the 13

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those which are detailed in xlv. 18–25. Here the gates are the outer gates only: cf. verse 3.

10. The reading of R. V. marg., 'he shall go forth,' is to be preferred; R. V. has inserted 'together' to avoid what is meaningless as it stands. At these 'appointed feasts' the privileges of the prince (verse 2) are in abeyance. The Syriac reads, 'the prince in their midst may return by the same gate by which he entered' (i. e. entering with one group, leaving with another), thus arriving, as it seems, at a mistaken consistency with verse 8.

xlvi. 11–15. *The remaining Regulations as to Offerings.*

11. Cf. xlv. 24, xlvi. 7. There is no mention of a lamb in chap. xlv. It would appear that the daily burnt offering of a lamb (verse 13) goes on just the same at the feasts.

12. These free-will offerings are apart from any fixed law: cf. Amos iv. 5; Deut. xii. 6; Num. xv. 3; and Lev. vii. 16 ff. (which ordains that such a sacrifice is to be eaten without delay). On such an occasion the east inner gate is to be opened for the prince, as on a Sabbath or new moon, and closed directly afterwards. The people do not make offerings except through the prince.

13. thou: here and in verse 14 LXX reads 'he,' of the prince,

first year without blemish for a burnt offering unto the LORD daily: morning by morning shalt thou prepare it.
14 And thou shalt prepare a meal offering with it morning by morning, the sixth part of an ephah, and the third part of an hin of oil, to moisten the fine flour; a meal offering unto the LORD continually by a perpetual
15 ordinance. Thus shall they prepare the lamb, and the meal offering, and the oil, morning by morning, for a continual burnt offering.

16 Thus saith the Lord GOD: If the prince give a gift unto any of his sons, it is his inheritance, it shall belong

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who has to provide the sacrifices; or, as in verse 15, 'they,' of the priests, who see to their being offered. The institution of the daily sacrifice is referred to in 1 Kings xviii. 29 and (with an evening sacrifice also) in 2 Kings xvi. 15. Num. xxviii. 3, 4 mentions the two daily sacrifices, both of which are unmentioned in Lev. xxiii. In later times the 'daily' or 'continual' sacrifice became the characteristic feature of the temple-worship: cf. Dan. viii. 11, xi. 31, xii. 11; Heb. vii. 27, x. 11.

14. The measures in Num. xxviii. 3, 4 are one tenth (flour) and one-fourth (oil). The Babylonian system of measures was sexagesimal. The word for 'moisten' occurs only here, but seems to be connected with the word for 'drops' in Song of Songs, v. 2. 'Fine flour' replaces the ordinary flour of the older offerings (Judges vi. 19; 1 Sam. i. 24); so in the Priests' code.

As regards the people, all this worship is purely spectacular; but Ezekiel's silence must not be taken to imply the absence either of private prayer and praise or of temple-music: cf. Luke i. 10. In Ezekiel's arrangement, however, the congregation, looking through the east gate-house, must have seen very little; hence, it could hardly have been carried out. That these festivals, with their carefully-appointed sacrifices, were not felt to be formal (much less burdensome) is clear from Pss. lxxxiv, cxviii, cxxii, &c.: cf. also Acts xx. 16.

xlvi. 16–18. *Addendum on the Prince's Estate* (cf. xlv. 7). The references to the prince in the preceding verses remind the author that he has not said all that needs to be said as to his 'demesne.' Kleinert has pointed out that the directly social teaching of Ezekiel, here and in xlv. 9–12, is connected with the prince. Yahweh alone is the real lord of the land (cf. the position of

to his sons; it is their possession by inheritance. But if 17
he give of his inheritance a gift to one of his servants, it
shall be his to the year of liberty; then it shall return to
the prince; but as for his inheritance, it shall be for his
sons. Moreover the prince shall not take of the people's 18
inheritance, to thrust them out of their possession;
he shall give inheritance to his sons out of his own
possession: that my people be not scattered every man
from his possession.

Then he brought me through the entry, which was at 19
the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the

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the Crown in English law); the exile has made possible the new division of the land, in which both swollen estates and landlessness will be impossible. Like the other prophets, he leaves off where actual legislation would have to begin.

17. No part of the estate is to pass permanently out of the possession of the family (individual ownership of land was a minor affair: cf. Num. xxvii. 1-11, xxxvi. 1-12). We are left to presume that the succession of the office would go to the firstborn (cf. Gen. xxv. 5, xlviii. 14), and therefore that the influence of the prince for the time being would always be paramount over the whole estate.

it shall return: once every seven years debts and slaves were to be released (Deut. xv. 1-18; Jer. xxxiv. 14); a release of land took place once every fifty years, at the year of jubilee (Lev. xxv. 10, xxvii. 24; Num. xxxvi. 4).

18. Cf. xlv. 8. A further sign that such acts as Ahab's (1 Kings xxi. 1-16) had left the deepest impression on the popular mind. There is much in Isaiah and Micah to show that this tyranny was not unknown in Judah: cf. Isa. v. 8; Mic. ii. 9, vi. 16. Land and citizenship went together, as in ancient Athens; cf. xlvii. 22.

xlvi. 19-24. *Addendum to the Description of the Temple.* There are two sets of kitchens; for the priests, near to the temple proper; for the people, quite distinct, in the four corners of the outer court. This section is clearly out of place, and should probably follow xlii. 14.

19. From the front of the temple (xliv. 4) Ezekiel is brought, by the northern door (xlii. 9), to the northern block of priests' cells, where the holy things are eaten (xlii. 13; Plan A, 7). The

priests, which looked toward the north: and behold,
20 there was a place on the hinder part westward. And he
said unto me, This is the place where the priests shall
boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, where they
shall bake the meal offering; that they bring them not
21 forth into the outer court, to sanctify the people. Then
he brought me forth into the outer court, and caused me
to pass by the four corners of the court; and behold, in
22 every corner of the court there was a court. In the four
corners of the court there were courts inclosed, forty
cubits long and thirty broad: these four in the corners
23 were of one measure. And there was a row *of building*
round about in them, round about the four, and it was
made with boiling places under the rows round about.
24 Then said he unto me, These are the boiling houses,
where the ministers of the house shall boil the sacrifice
of the people.

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exact position of the 'place' is uncertain; it must have lain, however, on the north side of the 'building' (xli. 12, 13); and probably a similar kitchen would be on the south side (see Plan A, 9).

20. to sanctify the people: see note on xliv. 19.

21. These are as far as possible from the 'place' of verse 19 (Plan A, 12).

22. inclosed: the word does not occur elsewhere; the treatise *Middoth* (ii. 6) suggests 'uncovered.' LXX and Syriac translate 'small,' which is only partially appropriate (the rooms were roughly 70×50 ft.). The almost unintelligible word translated 'in the corners' is wanting in the LXX and omitted in the Hebrew tradition.

23. A course of square stones (cf. 1 Kings vi. 36, vii. 4, 12) was built up inside them all round their walls, at the bottom of which were recesses for the cooking fires.

24. The 'ministers of the house' are the Levites (xliv. 11). 'Sacrifice' seems here to be used generically. The sacrifices were killed at the east gate of the inner court. The prince presents these sacrifices; the people consume those portions of them which are not reserved for the priests.

And he brought me back unto the door of the house; 47
and behold, waters issued out from under the threshold

SECTION III. THE LAND (xlvii, xlviii).

Now that the temple service is ordained, the blessing consequent thereon can flow out upon the whole land; it issues from the temple itself in the form of a stream, which quickly rises to a river, before it empties into the Dead Sea (xlvii. 1–12). Next, the frontiers of the land are marked out (xlvii. 13–23), and the whole land is divided amongst the tribes—seven tribes residing on the north of the sacred estate or 'oblation' (xlviii. 1–7); then comes the 'oblation' itself, containing both the temple and the city (xlviii. 8–22); and the remainder of the tribes on the south (xlviii. 23–29); last are mentioned the gates and the name of the city (xlviii. 30–35). The prophet here shows a disregard of material conditions, which is strange in one who had so loved 'the mountains of Israel.' The contour of the land is neglected altogether (see esp. note on xlviii. 8); the prophet, still aiming at symmetry above all things, is evidently working from a diagram (as in the case of the temple, where the elevations do not concern him), and does not stop to ask how far his new arrangement, even if it were acceptable, could be literally carried out. However they might have been impressed by the loftiness of this picture of the future, Zerubbabel and Nehemiah had to leave it entirely neglected; but to Ezekiel, in whose thought the rapture of the dreamer and the precision of the architect are combined, when the temple has once been set up in the centre of the land, nothing can hinder even the physical correspondence between the rest of the land and his conception of the chosen and eternal dwelling-place of God.

xlvii. 1–12. *The Temple Stream*: this flows from the temple in a south-easterly direction to the Dead Sea, becoming unfordable not quite a mile and a half from the temple; its fertilizing power is shown by its transformation of the Dead Sea into a lake swarming with fish and surrounded by noble trees. In its previous condition the Dead Sea could not now be tolerated. The double impossibility of the rapid rise of water in the stream, and the course of the river across the steep limestone range east of Jerusalem into the Dead Sea, does not occur to the prophet. The pool now called Hammam-esh-Shif suggests that a stream flowed west of the temple hill, and may have flowed originally within the temple enclosure, thus draining off the blood from the altar. A channel also exists on the surface of the rock itself, which was probably connected with a system of conduits: water, however, was always

of the house eastward, for the forefront of the house was toward the east: and the waters came down from under, from the right side of the house, on the south of the
2 altar. Then brought he me out by the way of the gate northward, and led me round by the way without unto the outer gate, by the way of *the gate* that looketh toward the east; and behold, there ran out waters on the right
3 side. When the man went forth eastward with the line in his hand, he measured a thousand cubits, and he caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the
4 ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through the waters, waters that were to the knees.

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a serious need in Jerusalem (cf. Isa. viii. 6 and the inscription in the Siloam tunnel). Southern Judah as a whole was bare and waterless (see G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geog. Holy Land*, p. 307), and to a Hebrew water was always precious enough to be invested with a kind of sanctity (see Rob. Smith, *Rel. Semites*, 2nd edit., p. 183 f.: cf. Num. xxi. 17 f.; also Joel iii. 18; Zech. xiv. 8; and Rev. xxii. 1 ff.). Hence we need not ask whether Ezekiel expected a literal fulfilment of his prediction; symbol and reality (like the material and the spiritual) were not as sharply distinguished for him as for us (cf. Introd., p. 32). It was enough for him that from the temple itself would proceed a constant blessing which would ensure throughout the land all the prosperity, happiness, and peace that the life of man could desire. His whole description is given with characteristically matter-of-fact *naïveté*—it is his way of predicting that the desert should blossom as the rose.

1. The prophet stands again at the door of the temple proper; the Talmud has 'the door of the porch of the house.' The right is of course the south; the water would naturally flow eastwards, past the great altar. It was usual for the wide courts of Phoenician temples to possess fountains and conduits of water.

2. Since the east gate is shut the prophet must go round by the north to the outside of it. The water is seen gushing out on its southern side.

ran: the word occurs nowhere else; its form and a possible Assyrian cognate, as well as the rapid increase of the stream, suggest a vigorous flow.

3. the line: cf. xl. 3; this is the same word as is used in Isa. xxviii. 10. The head of the Dead Sea is sixteen miles due east of Jerusalem; the Kidron flows in a south-easterly direction.

Again he measured a thousand, and caused me to pass through *the waters*, waters that were to the loins.
Afterward he measured a thousand; *and it was* a river 5
that I could not pass through: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed
through. And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou 6
seen *this*? Then he brought me, and caused me to
return to the bank of the river. Now when I had 7
returned, behold, upon the bank of the river were very
many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said 8
he unto me, These waters issue forth toward the eastern region, and shall go down into the Arabah: and they shall go toward the sea; into the sea *shall the waters go* which were made to issue forth; and the waters shall be
healed. And it shall come to pass, that every living 9
creature which swarmeth, in every place whither the rivers come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish: for these waters are come thither, and *the waters of the sea* shall be healed, and every thing shall
live whithersoever the river cometh. And it shall come 10

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7. After Ezekiel has marked the size of the river, its fertilizing qualities are pointed out to him. He is not actually taken more than 4,000 cubits, or about a mile and a third, from the city.

8. the Arabah is a term still used for what is now known as the 'Ghor,' the deep trench below the sea-level through which the Jordan flows from the Lake of Gennesaret to the Dead Sea, and extending to the steppes between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Akabah at the head of the Red Sea. The 'sea' here is the Dead Sea. For 'into the sea which was made to issue forth,' a clause whose intelligibility is bought at too dear a price by the R. V.'s large insertion ('shall the waters go'), read after the Syriac and (partly) LXX 'the bitter waters.' The LXX has strangely 'the water which went forth to Galilee on the east and came down to Arabia.'

9. the rivers, *lit.*, as R. V. marg., 'the two rivers'; a mistake perhaps due to Zech. xiv. 8. At the present day all fish die on entering the Dead Sea.

to pass, that fishers shall stand by it: from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim shall be a place for the spreading of nets; their fish shall be after their kinds, as the fish of the
11 great sea, exceeding many. But the miry places thereof, and the marishes thereof, shall not be healed; they shall
12 be given up to salt. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow every tree for meat, whose leaf shall not wither, neither shall the fruit thereof fail: it shall bring forth new fruit every month, because the waters thereof issue out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for healing.

13 Thus saith the Lord GOD: This shall be the border,

---

10. En-gedi is half-way along the west side of the Dead Sea, **En-eglaim** is perhaps the village of Ain-el-feshkah at the north-west end. The Moabite Eglaim (Isa. xv. 8) is different. The 'great sea' is the Mediterranean. It does not occur to Ezekiel to compare the river to 'the waters of Babylon.' The land of exile is 'not in all his thoughts.'

11. The solitary advantage of the present condition of the sea is not to be lost in the transformation of the future; salt is to be as plentiful then as now.

12. meat: i.e. 'food.' Such is the noble quality of a river whose source is in the holy soil of the temple, that the trees nourished by its streams bear fruit, and new fruit every month. For the healing properties of the leaves, cf. Rev. xxii. 2, which characteristically adds, 'for the healing of the nations.'

xlvii. 13-20. *The Frontiers of the Land.* Palestine had no fixed frontiers on the north or south; on the east the Hebrews disputed, not always successfully, for the land across the Jordan with Moab and Ammon; it was finally lost at the fall of the northern kingdom, and for the last 100 years before Ezekiel's time had probably been quite non-Hebraic. Hence, Ezekiel neglects it altogether, but makes up for its loss, and gains in symmetry, by extending Palestine as far as Hamath on the north (an arrangement which could be no more carried out at that time than the promise of Gen. xv. 18 that the eastern frontier should rest on the Euphrates: cf. Deut. i. 7; Joshua i. 4; Isa. xxvii. 12). The delimitation is similar to that of Num. xxxiv. 1 ff., which, however, includes the territory east of Jordan. See Map.

whereby ye shall divide the land for inheritance according to the twelve tribes of Israel: Joseph *shall have* portions. And ye shall inherit it, one as well as another; 14
concerning the which I lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers: and this land shall fall unto you for inheritance. And this shall be the border of the land: 15
on the north side, from the great sea, by the way of Hethlon, unto the entering in of Zedad; Hamath, 16
Berothah, Sibraim, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; Hazer-hatticon,

---

13. the twelve tribes: see note on xxxvii. 15. Cf. Amos ix. 14. The last clause is out of place here; nor would Ezekiel feel the need (as a copyist might) of explaining the familiar facts that Ephraim and Manasseh were both counted as tribes, and that Levi had no territory. The word here used for 'portions,' also, is not employed by Ezekiel.

14. Cf. Gen. xii. 7, xiii. 15, xvii. 8, &c.

15. Cf. xlviii. 1. At what point on the coast does the northern boundary start? Num. xxxiv. 7 suggests 'Mount Hor'; but nothing is known of such a mountain in that region. Hethlon is either Heitela, six miles from the coast north of Tripoli, or Adlun, on the coast north of the mouth of the Kasimiye, between Zarephath and Tyre.

the entering in of Zedad: in verse 20, xlviii. 1, and Num. xxxiv. 8 the phrase is 'the entering in of Hamath'; the 'outgoing' of the border is to be at Zedad. For this phrase, cf. Joshua xiii. 5; Judges iii. 3; 1 Kings viii. 65, &c. Hamath itself was a powerful city of the Hittites on the Orontes, which fell before the Assyrians. The entrance to Hamath must be the hollow country between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, or the plain at the north end of Lebanon; in which case the frontier includes the greater part of Phoenicia. David's sway is said to have actually bordered on Hamath (2 Sam. viii. 9: cf. 1 Kings viii. 65). Zedad may be Sadad, south-east of Homs.

16. On Hamath, see previous verse. Berotha is Berothai (2 Sam. viii. 8), in the kingdom of Zoba; or Bereitan, which lies on the west of Anti-Lebanon. Sibraim (Num. xxxiv. 9, Ziphron) is located between Hamath and Homs. LXX adds Eliam, which may be identical with Helam (2 Sam. x. 16), a frontier town between Israel and Syria. Hazer-hatticon, 'the middle Hazer' (R. V. marg.), must be identical with Hazar-

17 which is by the border of Hauran. And the border from
the sea shall be Hazar-enon at the border of Damascus,
and on the north northward is the border of Hamath.
18 This is the north side. And the east side, between
Hauran and Damascus and Gilead, and the land of Israel,
shall be Jordan; from the *north* border unto the east sea
19 shall ye measure. This is the east side. And the south
side southward shall be from Tamar as far as the waters of
Meriboth-kadesh, to the brook *of Egypt*, unto the great sea.
20 This is the south side southward. And the west side
shall be the great sea, from the *south* border as far as
over against the entering in of Hamath. This is the west
21 side. So shall ye divide this land unto you according to
22 the tribes of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that ye

---

enon (verse 17, xlviii. 1, and Num. xxxiv. 9), which may be Banias, or Jebel-el-Hadr, east of Banias. The frontier thus runs up to the foot of Mount Hermon. Hauran is the well-known region east of Jordan. The word is Aramaic for 'land of hollows.'

17. This verse seems to shut out the territory of Israel from that of Damascus or Hamath.

18. The eastern frontier we should have expected to start from Hazar-enon; no straight line can be drawn from Hauran to Damascus (south to north), and on from Damascus to Gilead (north-west to south-east); still less can 'the land of Israel' be added as a fourth to these three. Read 'from between Hauran and Damascus lies the border, and between Gilead and the land of Israel shall be the Jordan as the border.' Instead of 'shall ye measure,' read 'unto Thamar' (as verse 19). Thamar is said to have lain south-west or south of the Dead Sea.

19. Kadesh is now Ain-Kadis in the desert between Palestine and Egypt; cf. chap. xlviii. 28 and Num. xxvii. 14. 'The Brook (of Egypt)' can only be the Wadi-el-Arish. Winckler identifies the word rendered Egypt in the name of this 'Wadi' with the North Arabian Musur. The name in full occurs in Joshua xv. 4, 47; Num. xxxiv. 5; 1 Kings viii. 65; Isa. xxvii. 12, &c.: cf. also xlviii. 28.

20. As to the western frontier there could be no doubt; but Israel never made her way to the sea-coast.

22. With regard to 'strangers,' i. e. resident aliens, if they shall divide it by lot for an inheritance unto you and to the strangers that sojourn among you, which shall beget children among you; and they shall be unto you as the homeborn among the children of Israel; they shall have inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. And it 23 shall come to pass, that in what tribe the stranger sojourneth, there shall ye give him his inheritance, saith the Lord GOD.

Now these are the names of the tribes: from the north 48

---

bring up families, i. e. settle permanently in the country (and presumably are circumcised; but Ezekiel uses no word for circumcision; contrast xliv. 7), they will receive the allotment which entitles them to citizenship: cf. notes on xiv. 7, xlvi. 18. 'They shall have inheritance' is a correction for the (doubtless incorrect) punctuation 'they shall be inheritance.' A scanty population would often need thus to increase its numbers (cf. Maine, *Ancient Law*, chap. ii, 'Legal Fictions'). Deuteronomy constantly enjoins liberality to the 'strangers,' but never regards them as able to gain full citizenship (Deut. x. 18, xiv. 21, &c.). Compare also the provisions of the 'Law of Holiness,' Lev. xix. 10, xxiv. 16, &c. Corresponding to these strangers are the 'Proselytes' (Gentile members of the Jewish community) of New Testament times, who were often among the first to embrace Christianity.

xlviii. 1-7. *The Territories of the Seven Tribes North of the 'Oblation.'* As in xxxvii. 19, the twelve tribes are to be reunited; but their distribution is carried out on an entirely new principle (contrast Joshua xv-xix). Ezekiel is here quite free from conservatism; in general the Jewish legal mind is both conservative and boldly innovating. The tribes are arranged in twelve parallel strips, running from east to west, seven north and five south of the 'oblation.' Since Jerusalem was actually in the southern half of Palestine, no further thought (any more than in xlvii. 1-12) is given to the actual configuration or fertility of different parts of the country; as a matter of fact, the five southern tribes would have suffered considerably. The tribes who trace their descent from Jacob's concubines are furthest from the sanctuary, and Ephraim is put roughly in its old position; but the positions of Judah and Benjamin are interchanged, possibly in order that Palestine south of the 'oblation' might not be entirely given up to tribes tracing their descent from Leah.

Here, as in chap. xlvii and elsewhere, Ezekiel's influence on the author of the Apocalypse is strong; but there the city rather than

end, beside the way of Hethlon to the entering in of
Hamath, Hazar-enan at the border of Damascus, northward beside Hamath; and they shall have their sides
2 east *and* west; Dan, one *portion*. And by the border of
Dan, from the east side unto the west side; Asher, one
3 *portion*. And by the border of Asher, from the east side
4 even unto the west side; Naphtali, one *portion*. And by
the border of Naphtali, from the east side unto the west
5 side; Manasseh, one *portion*. And by the border of
Manasseh, from the east side unto the west side;
6 Ephraim, one *portion*. And by the border of Ephraim,
from the east side even unto the west side; Reuben, one
7 *portion*. And by the border of Reuben, from the east
side unto the west side; Judah, one *portion*.

8 And by the border of Judah, from the east side unto
the west side, shall be the oblation which ye shall offer,
five and twenty thousand *reeds* in breadth, and in length
as one of the portions, from the east side unto the west
side: and the sanctuary shall be in the midst of it.
9 The oblation that ye shall offer unto the LORD shall be

---

the temple is the important point; and Rev. vii emphasizes, not the territory, but the number of the tribes; the author had not Ezekiel's territorial expectations for the future.

1. Ezekiel begins by recapitulating the northern frontier (cf. xlvii. 15), but the expressions are difficult; for 'beside' 'from the sea' (as xlvii. 45) should be read; and for 'they shall have their sides' it would be better to read simply, as in the following verses, 'from the east to the west, Dan one (portion).'

xlviii. 8-22. *The 'Oblation'*: cf. xlv. 1-8, and Stade's *History of Israel*, vol. ii. pp. 47-9.

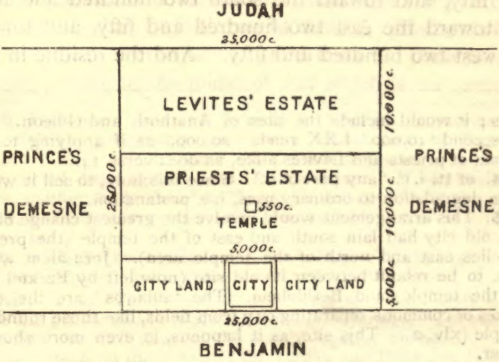
8. one of the portions, i. e. of the tribes; as a matter of fact, the length of the strips would increase towards the south, as the coast slopes out westwards.

9. the oblation: see Plan F. The term is here used, in a narrower sense, of the special and middle portion of the square round the temple; it was a rectangle of just over eight miles in length by just over three in breadth, and therefore it included the

five and twenty thousand *reeds* in length, and ten thou-
sand in breadth. And for these, even for the priests, shall 10
be the holy oblation; toward the north five and twenty
thousand *in length*, and toward the west ten thousand
in breadth, and toward the east ten thousand in breadth,
and toward the south five and twenty thousand in length:
and the sanctuary of the LORD shall be in the midst
thereof. *It shall be* for the priests that are sanctified of 11
the sons of Zadok, which have kept my charge; which
went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, as
the Levites went astray. And it shall be unto them an 12
oblation from the oblation of the land, a thing most holy,
by the border of the Levites. And answerable unto the 13

---

sites of Bethphage and Bethany, the Mount of Olives, and the valley of Hinnom.


JUDAH
25,000 c.
LEVITES' ESTATE
10,000 c.
PRINCE'S DEMESNE
25,000 c.
PRIESTS' ESTATE
PRINCE'S DEMESNE
550 c.
TEMPLE
10,000 c.
5,000 c.
CITY LAND
CITY
CITY LAND
5,000 c.
25,000 c.
BENJAMIN

PLAN F. THE 'OBLATION.'

10. These measurements amplify those of verse 9.

11. Cf. note on xliv. 15.

12. **from**: i. e. 'taken out of,' or 'in comparison with.'

13. The 'oblation of the Levites' is of precisely similar dimen-

border of the priests, the Levites shall have five and twenty thousand in length, and ten thousand in breadth: all the length shall be five and twenty thousand, and the
14 breadth ten thousand. And they shall not sell of it, neither exchange it, nor shall the firstfruits of the land
15 be alienated: for it is holy unto the LORD. And the five thousand that are left in the breadth, in front of the five and twenty thousand, shall be for common use, for the city, for dwelling and for suburbs: and the city shall
16 be in the midst thereof. And these shall be the measures thereof; the north side four thousand and five hundred, and the south side four thousand and five hundred, and on the east side four thousand and five hundred, and
17 the west side four thousand and five hundred. And the city shall have suburbs; toward the north two hundred and fifty, and toward the south two hundred and fifty, and toward the east two hundred and fifty, and toward
18 the west two hundred and fifty. And the residue in the

---

sions; it would include the sites of Anathoth and Gibeon. For the second '10,000,' LXX reads '20,000,' as if applying to the domain of priests and Levites alike, as does verse 14.

14. **of it,** i. e. 'any part of it.' Since it is holy, to sell it would mean degradation to ordinary uses, i. e. profanation.

15. This arrangement would involve the greatest change of all. The old city had lain south and east of the temple (the present city lies east and north of the temple area). Jerusalem would have to be rebuilt between its old site (now left by Ezekiel free for the temple) and Bethlehem. The 'suburbs' are the open spaces or commons separating city from fields, like those round the temple (xlv. 2). This site, as it happens, is even more short of water.

16. Cf. Rev. xxi. 16. The city is thus a square of about a mile and a half each way; Josephus gives the side of the square in his time as a mile (*Wars*, v. 4. 3).

17. The ratio of 'suburbs' to city is a little more than that of 'suburbs' to temple (50 : 500). Thus the whole breadth of the rectangle is taken up with city and suburbs.

length, answerable unto the holy oblation, shall be ten thousand eastward, and ten thousand westward: and it shall be answerable unto the holy oblation; and the increase thereof shall be for food unto them that labour
in the city. And they that labour in the city, out of all 19
the tribes of Israel, shall till it. All the oblation shall 20
be five and twenty thousand by five and twenty thousand: ye shall offer the holy oblation foursquare, with the possession of the city.

And the residue shall be for the prince, on the one 21
side and on the other of the holy oblation and of the possession of the city, in front of the five and twenty thousand of the oblation toward the east border, and westward in front of the five and twenty thousand toward the west border, answerable unto the portions, it shall be for the prince: and the holy oblation and the sanctuary
of the house shall be in the midst thereof. Moreover from 22
the possession of the Levites, and from the possession of the city, being in the midst of that which is the prince's,

---

19. How the inhabitants were to be selected, or governed, is not stated; presumably the prince would live in the city. 'Labour' and 'till' translate the same Hebrew word; Ezekiel, who would have agreed with Paul's maxim, 'If any will not work, neither let him eat' (2 Thess. iii. 10), could conceive of no laziness in his new régime; the idea, indeed, is that of 1 Thess. iv. 11, 12.

20. with the possession: i. e. including what belongs to the city, the oblation, in its wider sense, makes up a square.

xlviii. 21, 22. *The Prince's Estate.* This was necessarily large, since the prince had to provide the temple offerings. The domain stretches east and west of the sacred square, bounded by the Mediterranean on the west and the Jordan and Dead Sea (just including the site of Jericho) on the east; excluding the 'oblation,' its average length was some forty-four miles.

22. We should have expected a mention also of the priests' 'possession.' The reference to Benjamin is explained by the next verse; another indication that Ezekiel is writing with a diagram before him.

between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin,
shall be for the prince.
23 And as for the rest of the tribes: from the east side
24 unto the west side; Benjamin, one *portion*. And by the
border of Benjamin, from the east side unto the west
25 side; Simeon, one *portion*. And by the border of
Simeon, from the east side unto the west side; Issachar,
26 one *portion*. And by the border of Issachar, from the
east side unto the west side; Zebulun, one *portion*.
27 And by the border of Zebulun, from the east side unto
28 the west side; Gad, one *portion*. And by the border of
Gad, at the south side southward, the border shall be
even from Tamar unto the waters of Meribath-kadesh,
29 to the brook *of Egypt*, unto the great sea. This is the
land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of
Israel for inheritance, and these are their several portions,
saith the Lord God.
30 And these are the goings out of the city; on the north

---

xlviii. 23-29. *The Territories of the Remaining Tribes.* Issachar and Zebulon are moved from the north, Gad from across Jordan.

28. Recapitulation of south frontier (xlvii. 19), as verse 1 had repeated xlvii. 16.

xlviii. 30-35. *The Gates and the New Name of the City.* The gates are arranged symmetrically, three on each side (cf. Rev. xxi. 12, 13); each is connected with a tribe, and in order that Levi may be represented, Ephraim and Manasseh are united as Joseph. On the north and south are the six tribes claiming descent from Leah (Judah comes between Reuben and Levi), on the east are the two Rachel tribes with Dan; on the west the remaining 'concubine' tribes. Each tribe has thus its part in the whole; contrast 1 Kings xii. 16. There is nothing to correspond to the precious stones which form the foundations and gates of the city in Rev. xxi. 19-22; such distinction would take from the pre-eminence of the temple which, in the vision of the Apocalypse, exists no more.

30. goings out, *lit.* 'extensions' or 'outskirts'; a common word in the Priests' code: e. g. Num. xxxiv. 4, 5 ff.; Josh. xv. 4 ff., xix. 14, &c.

side four thousand and five hundred *reeds* by measure:
and the gates of the city shall be after the names of the 31
tribes of Israel; three gates northward: the gate of
Reuben, one; the gate of Judah, one; the gate of Levi,
one: and at the east side four thousand and five hundred 32
reeds; and three gates: even the gate of Joseph, one;
the gate of Benjamin, one; the gate of Dan, one: and 33
at the south side four thousand and five hundred *reeds*
by measure; and three gates: the gate of Simeon, one;
the gate of Issachar, one; the gate of Zebulun, one: at 34
the west side four thousand and five hundred *reeds*, with
their three gates: the gate of Gad, one; the gate of
Asher, one; the gate of Naphtali, one. It shall be 35
eighteen thousand *reeds* round about: and the name of
the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there.

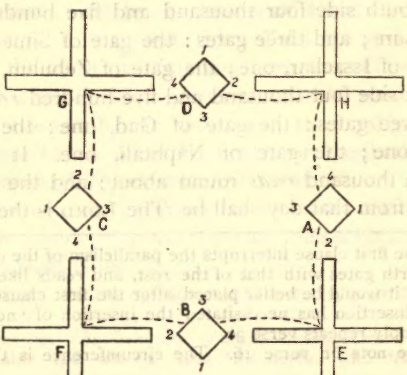
---

31. The first clause interrupts the parallelism of the description of the north gates with that of the rest, and reads like an afterthought; it would be better placed after the first clause of verse 30. Its insertion has necessitated the insertion of 'northward,' which simply repeats verse 30.

35. See note on verse 16. The circumference is thus about six miles.

the name of the city: cf. Isa. lx. 14-22, lxii. 12; Rev. xxi. 2. After describing in the fullest detail the temple, the author concludes his prophecy with the glory of the city, as if the city were to be, what it had been before, the centre of the land. By applying to the old centre the fundamental characteristic of his ideal for the future, Ezekiel joins old and new together; while he further makes it clear, in a conclusion as sudden and as impressive as that of a sonata of Beethoven, that the glory which fills the temple is no material presence to be confined to any one building made with hands, but fills also the city, and therefore, presumably, the holy land in its entirety.

PLAN G. THE THRONE CAR.


1
4
2
G
D
3
H
2
1
4
1
3
C
3
1
A
4
2
B
3
2
4
F
E
1

At A, B, C, D are the four living creatures.

The figures 1, 2, 3, 4 represent the faces of man, lion, eagle, ox, respectively.

At E, F, G, H the double wheels (moving at right angles to each other) touch the ground.

The dotted lines represent the outstretched wings.

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